

THE ROMANCE OF EMPIRE

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The

Romance of Empire

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PREFACE

THE making of the British Empire has been a great adventure of which we may well be proud—an adventure in which the manhood of the race has proved its mettle, time and time again, through many centuries and in many lands, an adventure in which men have spilt their blood freely, with a genial courage, with a really rollicking spirit of gallantry, and with a fine carelessness of danger and death. The fighting man and the adventurer are not the noblest types of humanity, but they have their value and their nobility. Not yet has the time come when the audacity of a brave man in a tight place, the steady nerve of a strong man in a dangerous encounter, the quick wit of a gallant fellow in a difficult enterprise, shall not be honoured and admired. The story of the Empire is a series of heroic biographies, and the most peace-loving idealist of to-day need not be ashamed of the thrill that moves him when he reads of men who fought hard, and dared many dangers, and suffered every kind of hardship, with such admirable disdain of ease.

But, really, the Empire was not so much gained by fighting and bloodshed as by courage of a quiet kind—the courage of endurance, of industry, of honesty, of long patience, and sober character. Soldiers and sailors, naturally, have most of the

popular homage, but no less honour should be given to those farmers and merchants and thrifty traders who dared greatly and suffered much, for no higher aim than a prosperous home and a peaceful life. This is the true glory of the Empire.

Yet only a few men, like Walter Raleigh in the old days and Cecil Rhodes in recent times, have dreamed of Empire as a great ideal. The men who made the British Empire dreamed rather of political and religious liberty, of fat flocks and rich pasture-lands, of good red gold, of the fruits of Mother Earth, and of the skins of beasts. For these things, not for an Imperial idea, did they adventure their lives and their fortunes, and for these things did they endure hardships gladly, fight stubbornly, and sometimes die heroically. Sometimes, also, the spirit of adventure for adventure's sake, which will always stir young blood, sent the sons of the race across the seas for no other object than a little fighting or a little fun. Yet, though these were the chief motives which inspired the men who made the Empire, it was a spirit of honest patriotism, of real loyalty to the mother-country, and of reverence for the traditions and honour of the race, which held the Empire together in a confederacy of nations. Even the man who dreamed of fat sheep and the adventurer who went a-hunting the skins of beasts had somewhere at the bottom of his heart a sentiment for the ties of race and for the honour of the flag. Sometimes that sentiment has been stronger than the love of self or the love of life, and when the Empire has been in danger the trader and the farmer have not been the last to step into the ranks of fighting men.

This book deals chiefly with the personal and adventurous side of a story which has been told often before in many books. I have called it a Romance, but I hope that will not impute

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the accuracy of the facts. I believe there is a place for this volume, because, as far as I know, there is no book of moderate size which gives so complete a narrative of the great adventure from this point of view. The ordinary school text-books seem to me dull and lifeless, their authors having crammed in too many political and economic arguments, and omitted those adventurous details which alone appeal to young blood.

My acknowledgments are due to many historians and biographers, and it would need a long list to enumerate them. Perhaps in a book of this kind it would be superfluous. But I have specially to mention with gratitude the generosity of Mr. A. G. Bradley in allowing me to make use of some of the picturesque details in his two fascinating and scholarly books, 'The Fight with France for North America' and his 'Life of Wolfe.'

PHILIP GIBBS.

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Keep not standing, fixed and rooted,
Briskly venture, briskly roam ;
Head and hand, where'er thou foot it,
And stout heart are still at home.

In what land the sun does visit,
Brisk are we whate'er betide :
To give space for wandering is it
That the world was made so wide.

T. CARLYLE.

(Translated from Goethe.)

THE ROMANCE OF EMPIRE

PART I

UNROLLING THE MAP

CHAPTER I

THE CALL OF THE SEA

THE British Empire was founded in its beginning not on land, but on sea. It was our seamen, not our soldiers, who first planted the flag in far countries, and who were first of their race to unroll the map of the world, so great a part of which is now called Britain Beyond the Seas. Even now the Empire depends not a little for its prosperity and its safety upon British seamen; one-third the trade of the whole world is carried in British ships. Not only a large proportion of the Empire's wealth depends upon those great merchant fleets, but the food-supplies of the mother-country, and therefore our very lives, and the continued existence of the Empire itself, are subject to the safeguarding of British merchant-ships by British battleships in time of war. It was by obtaining the supremacy of the sea that our forefathers were able to build up the Empire; and it is by maintaining that supremacy that we and our descendants may alone hold it.

England—'this little isle set in a silver sea,' as Shakespeare called it—is the inheritance of men who were truly 'rocked in the cradle of the deep.' The first Englishmen—Angles,

Saxons, and Jutes—were sea-rovers who came with the north-east wind, and they were followed by the Danes, who lived by piracy, and whose captains were sea-kings, holding their titles by right of conquest over wind and wave. Even when Angles, Saxons, and Danes had abandoned their sea-life to till the rich soil, and to found their rival kingdoms on this good English land, the voice of the sea was still in their ears, their pulses still beat to the tune of the surf breaking upon our rugged coasts, and they were kept hard and tough by the cold, keen winds booming over holt and headland. As Charles Kingsley sang in his ‘Ode to the North-East Wind,’

‘ ’Tis the hard gray weather
Breeds hard Englishmen.’

And those, at least, who dwelt within sound of the sea, and who gazed with gray English eyes, eastward or westward, through sea-mist and spray, could never wholly lose that spirit of adventure and that love of the great waters which had stirred the Viking’s blood.

It is not strange, therefore, that Englishmen should have ‘gone down to the sea in ships,’ and ploughed the furrows of the world of waters with the keels of English boats. It is strange, rather, that our countrymen should have been behind-hand at first in tracking their way to unknown oceans, and should have let seamen of other nations lead the way and put new lands—new worlds almost—upon their charts before they themselves were quickened into the desire for similar discoveries.

It is strange that for several hundreds of years, until the approach of that wonderful sixteenth century which was to be the Golden Age of England, the spirit of English seamanship seemed to be sleeping. Although King Alfred, who is justly called the Father of the English Navy, had been quick to realize that the sea was England’s ‘first line of defence,’ and had built and manned a little fleet of battleships, his example was speedily forgotten by those who followed him, and England

had no Royal Navy even when Henry VIII. first came to the throne, and the dawn of modern England broke through the darkness of the Middle Ages.

England, however, was never without her sailors. In Devon and Cornwall, along the south coast and the east, there was always a hardy race of fisherfolk who knew the secrets of the sea; and when, after foreign and civil wars, plagues and peasant rebellions, and the tyrannies of usurping kings, the English people began to find some measure of liberty, peace, and prosperity, a goodly trade with foreign parts was built up by merchant-ships which sailed from English ports to Cork, to Antwerp, to Bordeaux, to Venice and Genoa, and other markets of Europe, with 'Frankish wools' from London and Norwich; with 'Suffolk stuffs,' 'village medleys,' kerseys of all colours, friezes, white and unshorn, and all manner of fustians and cloths, for which England became renowned.

But even then our merchant seamen kept to the well-known sea-tracks between their own island and the European ports. Good money or profitable exchange for English cargoes was all they sought, and as yet it never entered their heads to plunge into unknown seas for new lands, where there might be greater riches.

It was the Portuguese and Spaniards who were first daring enough to set out upon voyages of discovery, to find out what lay upon the other side of the great Atlantic. For centuries there had been legends among them of a land of fabulous wealth, peopled by strange monsters, far away across the western sea, where the sun went down. 'The Voyages of St. Brandan and St. Malo' and 'The Travels of the Seven Spanish Bishops,' in which these old legends are narrated, were as well known to the Spaniards and Portuguese as the story of 'Sindbad the Sailor'; and, although the most intelligent amongst them did not believe in the marvellous tales of the 'Isle of Saints,' which was the abode of the blessed dead, or of the 'Isle of Delight,' laden with fruits and sweet spices and precious stones, or in the story of the 'back of the whale,'

upon which St. Brandan had lighted a fire, which stirred the island monster from its sleep, there were many men of learning who thought that at the bottom of these old legends there must be some truth about a land lying on the other side of the unknown sea.

Among the men who brooded over these popular tales was Prince Henry of Portugal, called afterwards Prince Henry the Navigator. It is pleasant to know that he had English blood in his veins, for he was the son of Philippa, daughter of our John of Gaunt—'time-honoured Lancaster'—and the wife of King John of Portugal, who reigned between the years 1383 and 1433. Prince Henry was made Governor of Algarves, the southernmost province of his father's kingdom, and here, at the seaport of Sagres, near Lagos town, he spent forty years of a busy and noble life. He did not care for the ordinary luxury and idleness of a prince's Court, but he gathered around him a little company of hardy and gallant sailors, who were ready to serve him to the death, and to undertake any perilous enterprise with which he might entrust them.

Prince Henry had four aims in life: to push aside the veil of darkness which hung over the undiscovered world; to found a Portuguese Empire beyond the seas; to increase the wealth of Portugal by establishing a steady trade with the East; and to carry the blessings of Christianity into heathen lands. He, like many others of his time, believed that there must be a way to India by pushing round by Africa, of which only the northern coast had been explored; and he believed, also, that by sailing straight towards the setting sun, a ship might find a nearer way to 'far Cathay,' which we now call China, where, according to old travellers' tales, might be found the world's storehouse of gold and precious stones, silks and spices, and Nature's most luscious fruits.

It was with these ideas that he inspired the seamen at his Court, and at his cost, in good stout ships built under his direction, with charts drawn by his chartographers and with instruments invented by his men of science, they set out from time to

time on perilous voyages, away from the well-known highways of the sea. Although Prince Henry and his navigators failed in their great designs, they were rewarded by some measure of success, and were able to put many new names on their charts. In 1420 one of Henry's captains, named Zarko, in beating round Africa to find a passage to India, discovered the island of Madeira. Some years later Gonzalez Cabral, after an adventurous voyage, sighted the Azores, and, having explored them, went back with joy to report these new additions to his master's maps.

In 1460 Diego Gomez and Antonio de Nolli sighted those 'islands in the ocean,' as they called them for want of a general name, which are now known as the Cape Verde group, and, exploring them, called the largest Santiago.

Other great captains of Henry the Navigator—Nuño Tristan, Diego de Sevil, Anton Gonzalez — although they never reached the great goal of which their master dreamt—the southernmost point of Africa—yet have the honour of being the first seamen to lead the way towards the Cape of Good Hope, the discovery of which 'changed directly or indirectly the knowledge, the trade, the whole face of the world at once and for ever.'

It was only twenty-six years after Prince Henry's death that the Cape was at last rounded, but it was by one of the captains trained in his school of navigation, Bartholomew Diaz, who in 1486 sighted the magnificent promontory which showed at last that the end of Africa had been reached, and that the open sea was indeed a highway to the East.

Two years before this great discovery a young man named Bartholomew Columbus set out from Lisbon on a vessel bound for England. He carried with him a number of charts and a letter addressed to King Henry VII., who was then upon the English throne, and considered one of the most learned and enlightened sovereigns of Europe. This Bartholomew Columbus was the brother of one Christopher, a Genoese by birth, who had been vainly petitioning King John of

Portugal to find the money for an expedition to sail across the Atlantic to the land that lay beyond. He believed that this ocean covered the whole space between the east of Asia and the west of Europe, so that a ship starting westward from Portugal or Spain, and sailing in a straight line, would eventually reach the Indies. King John was pleased 'to consider the matter,' and while he kept poor Christopher Columbus fretting and fuming in a fever of impatience, he was treacherous enough to send off secretly three caravels with instructions to sail westward on the line shown on the chart of the Genoese sailor. Fortunately, in this case, as in most others, trickery was not successful. After a little while King John's captains lost heart, and returned with the report that no land could be seen. Christopher Columbus had meanwhile heard of the secret voyage, and 'when,' said his son, 'this underhand dealing came to my father's ears, he took a great aversion to Lisbon and the Portuguese nation.'

It was then that he entrusted his brother Bartholomew with a mission to the English King, who might look with favour upon the great scheme, and deal honestly with the sailor who proposed it.

By great misfortune, however, Bartholomew's ship was attacked and captured by pirates, and he was taken prisoner. For some years he remained in captivity, and when at last he escaped and managed to reach London, he had lost all his belongings, his charts and his letter among them, and was absolutely destitute. To earn sufficient money for food and lodging he wasted much valuable time in drawing and selling maps to English sailors. But his brother's business was always in his mind, and as soon as he could afford to purchase a decent suit of clothes, he presented himself at the English Court. King Henry received him kindly, and heard his proposals with interest. He, like King John of Portugal, promised 'to consider the matter,' but the vague promise went no further, and meanwhile the English nation lost that great and priceless opportunity by which they might have been the first

to discover the New World, and to found that great empire in the West which was to make Spain the wealthiest and most powerful country in Europe.

For Christopher Columbus, despairing of ever again hearing news of his long-lost brother, took his charts to Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, and, after being ridiculed and scorned as a dreamer and a madman, did at last persuade the King and Queen that his story might have some truth in it, and his scheme be worth the venture. So it happened that in the service of Spain Columbus sailed West, and, in spite of the superstitions, the cowardice, and the mutinous conduct of his crews, after a long voyage across a seemingly endless ocean, heard the shout of 'Land! land!' and, stepping from his cabin, where he had been brooding over his beloved charts, saw with actual eyes that land of which he had so often dreamed.

The dawn was just breaking, and as the golden arrows of the sun shot over the islands of the Bahamas, as they were afterwards called, the sailors in their thankfulness broke into the solemn chant of the *Te Deum*. The boats were manned, and Columbus, going first, carried aloft the Royal standard of Spain, while behind each of his captains bore a banner of the Green Cross; and so, with colours flying and music playing, they rowed to the beach, where a group of natives crowded in awe and astonishment at the white strangers.

Columbus was the first to step ashore. He wore a rich dress, and carried in his hand a drawn sword. Kneeling, he kissed the sand, giving thanks to God with tears in his eyes. Then the Royal standard was set up, and the banners of the Cross were raised, and with a loud voice Columbus took possession of the land on behalf of Spain.

The New World had been discovered. The curtain which had long hidden the land beyond the sea was at last drawn up, and in a few years, following upon the track of Columbus, a great Spanish Empire was to be built up with a wealth and magnificence of which the mind of man had never dreamed.

The sailors of England were still fishing or trading between

well-known ports when those of Spain and Portugal were thus employed, but before long they, too, would go 'Westward-Ho!' and then would begin the long rivalry between Spain and England in which the victory was with us.

CHAPTER II

MEN OF BRISTOL CITY

To Bristol City 'in the West Countree' there came toward the end of the fifteenth century some news of what the Portuguese sailors were daring and doing in their voyages of discovery. At that time Bristol was one of the most prosperous seaports of England, and it was crowded with merchant-ships trading with foreign parts, and with vessels flying the flags of Spain and Portugal, Venice and Genoa, France and Flanders, bringing into this country rich cargoes of foreign fruits, silks, spices, and metals. In the Bristol taverns might be seen any day of the week a motley crowd of sea-faring men of all nations, drinking and dicing with English skippers and merchant-men, and in such places as these many were the strange stories of the sea told in foreign lingo and broad West-Country dialect—of magic islands, where every grain of sand was gold; of fabulous monsters who kept guard over them, destroying any ship or crew bold enough to sail near them; and tales less marvellous, but not less thrilling, of Moorish corsairs and Irish pirates, of mutinies, shipwrecks, and wild deeds on foreign coasts.

It is quite possible that among the sailors who came to Bristol were one or two of those who had sailed with Gonzalez or Cabral, or some other of those famous captains who served under Prince Henry the Navigator. Be that as it may, it was at this time that the Bristol merchants first learnt of the legends of St. Brandan, and of the legendary land lying across the Western seas. These stories so fastened themselves upon

the imagination of those shrewd traders that in June of the year 1480 one of them, named Master John Jay, equipped at his own cost a vessel of 80 tons, and got together a crew of Bristol men, and sent it out under Captain Thomas Lloyd (who is called by the old chronicler William of Worcester, 'the most skilful master-mariner of all England'), to seek the fabulous islands of St. Brandan and the 'Seven Spanish Cities' described in the old stories. Fortune was against the first voyage of discovery which ever set out from Bristol towards the New World. The little ship, hardly so big as a modern pleasure yacht, was battered about by fearful storms, and, having sailed six weeks without once sighting land, her head was turned round for home, and she came into the Port of Bristol again on September 15 of the same year, three months and three days after her departure.

This failure seems to have discouraged our Bristol men for a time, for we hear of no more expeditions going out until eleven years later. It was then that there came to Bristol a remarkable man named John Cabot, bringing with him his wife and three sons, of whom one (Sebastian) was to become famous in the history of the sea.

John Cabot was, like Christopher Columbus, a Genoese by birth, but before settling in England he had been a citizen of Venice. Not much is known of his early life, but he is described as a maker of charts and maps. At one time he travelled as a trader to the East, and it was at Mecca, when he was buying spices from the East, the idea first came to him that, on account of the roundness of the earth, there might be a shorter way to Cathay (or China) and the Indies by sailing straight out into the West from Europe.

When he settled down in Bristol somewhere about the year 1491, he once again stirred the imagination of the Bristol traders into a belief of a great land across the Atlantic; for, according to the Spanish Ambassador in England, who in 1498 wrote a report of John Cabot to his Government, 'It is seven years since those of Bristol used to send out every year

a fleet of two, three, or four caravels to go and search for the Isle of Brazil and the Seven Cities, according to the fancy of this Genoese.'

Of these voyages of discovery which had their beginning in Bristol we have no records, and it is evident that they were all unsuccessful.

But four years after Columbus had set foot in the New World John Cabot resolved to go himself in search of undiscovered lands. In 1496 he petitioned King Henry VII. for permission to take possession of any such countries in the name of England. King Henry, having lost his opportunity with Columbus, was glad of this new chance of extending his dominion to new lands beyond the seas, and duly sent his Royal patent to Master John Cabot, of Bristol City. Doubtless he had hoped that Henry would provide some of the cost of the expedition, but generosity was not the strong point of the English King, and in this expectation Cabot was disappointed. Nevertheless, as far as it went, the Royal warrant was satisfactory, and it is worth quoting as the first ever issued by a Sovereign of England for the purpose of establishing new colonies under our flag.

'The tenury hereafter ensuing' (so runs the introduction) 'for the discovery of new and unknown lands :

'Henry by the Grace of God, King of England and France, and Lord of Ireland, to all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting :

'Be it known that we have given and granted, and by these presents do give and grant for us and our heirs to our well-beloved John Cabot, citizen of Venice, to Lewis, Sebastian, and Sanctius, sons of the said John and to the heirs of them and every one of them, and their deputies, full and free authority, leave and power to sail to all ports, countries and seas of the East, of the West, and of the North, under our banners and ensigns, with five ships of what burthen or quality soever they be, and as many mariners or men as they shall have with them

in the said ships, upon their own proper costs and charges, to seek out, discover, and find whatsoever isles, countries, regions, or provinces of the heathens and infidels whatsoever they be and in what part of the world soever they be, which before this time have been known to all Christians :

‘ We have granted to them and also to every of them, the heirs of them and every of them and their deputies, and have given them licence to set up our banners and ensigns in every village, town, castle, island or mainland by them newly found. And that the aforesaid John and his sons, or their heirs and assigns, may subdue occupy and possess all such towns, cities, castles, and isles by them found which they can subdue, occupy and possess as our vassals and lieutenants, getting unto us the rule, title and jurisdiction of the same villages, towns, castles, and firm land so found.’

After some more of such legal rigmarole, in which it was agreed that the King should receive a fifth part of all profits, this remarkable document concludes as follows :

‘ Willing and most straitly commanding all and singular our subjects, on land as on sea, to give good assistance to the aforesaid John and his sons and deputies, and that as well in arming and furnishing their ships or vessels as in provision of food and in buying of victuals for their money, and all other things by them to be provided necessary for the said navigation, they do give them all their help and favour. In witness whereof we have caused to be made these our letters patent.

‘ Witness ourself at Westminster, the fifth day of March, in the eleventh year of the reign (1496).’

With this wordy and wonderful document in his possession, magnificently inscribed on parchment, and duly signed and sealed by the Royal hand, Cabot had little difficulty in getting the assistance of the Bristol merchants to build him good and seaworthy vessels, and to equip them with all things necessary for a long voyage, while there was no lack of volunteers in

Bristol to man the vessels bound on such an adventure under royal patronage.

It was probably in May of the following year (the exact date is uncertain) that a little fleet of five boats with John Cabot's flagship, the *Matthew*, left the Port of Bristol, and, in the words of Kingsley's song, 'went sailing out into the West.' According to contemporary accounts, Cabot did not steer a straight course, but after touching the west coast of Ireland, went so far northwards that 'he found monstrous heaps of ice swimming in the sea and in manner continual daylight. Thus, seeing such heaps of ice before him, he was enforced to turn his sails and follow the West.' Sailing continually 'with the North Star on his right hand,' he at last struck new land, since identified by most authorities as that part of North America which we now call Newfoundland. Here he planted the flag of England, the first English flag to be set up in the New World, or in any colony beyond the seas, and took possession on behalf of King Henry VII. Then he sailed southwards for 'three hundred leagues,' along a country inhabited by natives who used needles for making nets and snares for catching game.

'He found also,' continues Peter Martyr, who heard the narrative from John Cabot's son Sebastian, who claimed to have accompanied his father, 'the people of those islands covered with beasts' skins, yet not without the use of reason. He saith also that there is great plenty of bears in those regions which use to eat fish. For plunging themselves into the water, where they perceive a multitude of those fish to lie, they fasten their claws in their scales, and so draw them to land and eat them.'

On his return, Cabot sighted 'two large and fertile islands' on the starboard (since conjectured to be one of the Newfoundland promontories and a part of the mainland), and one is strongly reminded of Don Quixote and the fabulous island which he promised to his faithful squire Sancho Panza when one learns that John Cabot presented one of these 'islands'

to his Genoese barber, and the other to a poor Burgundian servant who had sailed with him on the voyage.

'Both of them,' wrote an Italian gentleman to the Duke of Milan, 'regard themselves as counts, nor does my lord the Admiral esteem himself anything less than a prince.'

John Cabot and his Bristol men, although they had not found any 'towns, cities, or castles' to 'subdue, occupy, and possess,' as enumerated with so much solemnity in the Royal warrant, were, nevertheless, well pleased, and had a right to be well pleased with the success of their mission. For they had planted the English flag on the coast of North America (which they still believed to be the East Indies), and John Cabot himself, in a conversation with the Italian gentleman above mentioned, declared himself abundantly satisfied with the produce of the waters, stating that the sea was full of fish, which were taken both with the net and in baskets weighted with a stone, and that, in a word, so much stock fish could be brought thence that England would have no further need of its old commerce with Iceland.

No doubt worthy Master Cabot bore himself a little braggishly in Bristol upon his return, for he found himself a hero in the old English seaport, and indeed in the whole nation. King Henry was highly pleased, and sent him a sum of money (not overmuch, for Henry was a careful man) 'wherewith to amuse himself,' and promised that in the spring he should have ten ships armed to his order, and any number of prisoners, except those confined for high treason, to man his fleet.

'He is styled the Great Admiral,' wrote our Italian authority, who was much interested in this business. 'Vast honour is paid to him; he dresses in silk, and the English run after him like mad people, so that he can enlist as many of them as he pleases, and a number of our own rogues as well.'

The Spanish and Portuguese Ambassadors were greatly put out by these enterprises, and wrote lengthy letters on the subject (from which we get most of our information) to their

respective Governments. For already, Spain especially was jealous of any discoveries of new countries being made by other nations, and considered that the Spanish flag alone had a right to float over the New World—a claim which was to be boldly and successfully contested by British sailors later on.

Of the second voyage of John Cabot and his sons there is no accurate record, but it is believed that he, with his Bristol men, attempted to penetrate to Asia by the North-West, being the first to venture upon that famous and fabulous 'North-West passage' to the Indies which cost so many brave lives to England in after-years. Finding himself barred by the ice-fields of the North, he turned southward again, coasting as far down the North-American shore as Florida, where, provisions failing, they returned to England. They brought home three natives of Newfoundland who 'were clothed in beastes' skins, and did eat raw flesh, and spake such speech that no man could understand them; and in their demeanour like to brute beastes.'

After the voyage, John Cabot disappears from history, and it is presumed he died at Bristol shortly afterwards. To his son Sebastian he bequeathed the memory of his great voyages and something of his own genius, but little, it is thought, of his daring and adventurous spirit.

Sebastian, indeed, is rather a puzzle. It is doubtful whether he really did accompany his father on any of his voyages, and there is no doubt that, in relating the history of them, he was not only inaccurate, but exaggerated them beyond the bounds of truth. For many years he lived in England, famous on account of his father's achievements, in which he claimed a share, and more deservedly renowned, perhaps, as a map-maker. He undoubtedly had much influence in this country as the one man who knew, or who said he knew, the chart-lines to the New World, and it was probably with his charts in the cabin that other Bristol men set out across the Atlantic on the track of the older Cabot.

For a time Sebastian left England, and sold his services to

Spain, leading an expedition, which proved a disastrous failure, to South America in search of gold. Some of his vessels were wrecked, others were lost, no gold was found, and when Sebastian came back to Spain he was clapped into prison for incompetence. He was, however, quickly reinstated in Royal favour, and became Pilot-Major of Spain, an office of high honour and responsibility. He returned to England in the reign of Edward VI., who gave him a considerable salary as Royal Chief Pilot, and afterwards he became Governor of the Company of Merchant Adventurers, formed for the discovery of new countries and the development of English trade with foreign parts.

It was when he held that office that he promoted the famous voyage of Sir Hugh Willoughby and Richard Chancellor to discover a way to the East through Iceland and Greenland. This expedition was fitted out by the merchants of London at an expense of £6,000, and Willoughby was appointed its commander, 'both by reason of his goodly personage' (for he was tall of stature) 'and his singular skill in the services of war.' On May 10, 1553, he sailed from Deptford with three ships—the *Bona Esperanza*, his own vessel; the *Edward Bonaventura*, commanded by Richard Chancellor; and the *Bona Confidentia*, with Captain Cornelius Durforth.

After a stormy voyage due north, Chancellor parted from his two companions in the North Sea. Poor Willoughby and Durforth, with their gallant crews of sixty-two men, were tossed upon the ice-bound coast of Russian Lapland. They got on shore in safety, but every man of them perished from cold and hunger. The two ships with the dead bodies of the crews were found the following year by Russian fishermen, with a journal written up to the day of his death by Willoughby himself, describing their adventures and sufferings.

Richard Chancellor, after waiting about for Willoughby, had continued his voyage, and finally reached the mouth of the Dwina, in the White Sea. He was treated with great kindness by the natives, and set off on the long overland journey to the

Court of the Russian Emperor, Ivan the Terrible, at Moscow. Here he and his men were entertained with the utmost hospitality, and he arranged a treaty giving freedom of trade with Russia to English ships. Upon his safe return home he gave an interesting account of Russia, which resulted in the formation of an English trading company called the Muscovy Company, and laid the foundations of a great commerce between Russia and England which has been steadily maintained from that day to this. Two years later, after a second voyage to Moscow, Richard Chancellor was wrecked and drowned off the coast of Scotland.

To Sebastian Cabot, of Bristol City, a great share of the credit must be given for the formation of the expedition which led to the discovery of Russia and to this great increase in English trade. Almost the last scene of his life was when, as an old man of seventy-eight, he went down to Gravesend to bid god-speed to Captain Steven Burrowe, of the *Serchthrift*, bound for North-Eastern discovery. On that occasion old Cabot 'gave to the poore most liberall alms,' and then at the sign of the Christopher (an inn at Gravesend) he and his friends 'banketted, and he entered into the dance himself amongst the rest of the young and lusty company.'

A year later, in 1557, Sebastian Cabot died, and to this day his name and memory, for his own sake and for the sake of his still greater father, are the pride of Bristol, in which city he lived for the greater part of his life.

To Bristol men, indeed, it will be seen, belongs the greatest honour of having been the first to sail from an English port across the Atlantic to the New World and of having done most to arouse the spirit of English seamanship for the discovery of unknown lands. So far, it must be admitted, their success, such as it was, could not compare with that gained by the Spaniards and the Portuguese.

During the half century that followed the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus, Spain had firmly established her Colonial Empire. With marvellous rapidity great

and magnificent cities had been built in the islands of the West Indies, in the Azores, the Canaries, and the Cape Verde Islands. They had conquered Mexico and Peru, and the Isthmus of Panama was a highway across which passed continually caravans laden with gold and precious stones, to be carried home to Spain by great galleons. In those fifty years many prosperous colonies had been planted in South America, governed by the nobility of Spain, and sending home enormous wealth of spices, fruits, and gold to the mother-country.

Against such success as this the English could claim but little for themselves. The men of Bristol City had discovered the land of cod-fish, and had brought back two natives of North America. Their expectations of golden islands and lands of spices and luscious fruits had been bitterly disappointed, and for this reason their first enthusiasm for voyages of exploration gave way to indifference. It was not until Elizabeth came to the throne, and a new sense of patriotism stirred the hearts of Englishmen, that our seamen challenged the might of Spain, and by their daring and adventurous spirit made their nation the greatest sea-power of the world.

CHAPTER III

THE SEA-ROVERS

WHEN Queen Elizabeth came to the throne in 1558 the Royal Navy of England was hardly strong enough to attack the well-armed Spanish galleons with any chance of victory. In the service of the Crown there were only seven revenue cruisers in commission, the largest of them no more than 120 tons, and eight merchant brigs altered for fighting purposes. In the dockyards of Deptford and Plymouth there were about twenty rotten old ships, which had been built by Henry VIII. when the French had threatened an invasion of this country, but no longer seaworthy, and dismantled of their artillery.

As an excuse for this state of things, Sir William Cecil, the Queen's great Minister, told his mistress that the men were not to be had to handle a fleet, and 'to fit out ships without men was to set armour on stakes on the seashore.'

This seems to us now a lame excuse, for, surely, if Elizabeth had called for seamen, from Limehouse to Land's End there would have sprung thousands of volunteers ready to sail any ship and to face any foe. Indeed, it was at their own cost and risk, and without any encouragement from the Crown, that a privateer fleet was fitted out in the early years of Elizabeth's reign to defend the rights and liberties of English seamen against the tyranny of Spain.

England at this time was at a critical and dangerous epoch of her history. Although war had not yet been declared against her by Spain, it was perfectly well known that Philip II., as the head of the greatest Catholic Power of Europe, was preparing, at the bidding of the Pope, to invade this country with an invincible army. The object of this 'great enterprise,' as it was called, was to dethrone Elizabeth, the Protestant, to place in her stead Mary, Queen of Scots, the Catholic, and to bring back the English people to the Roman faith, under the supremacy of the Pope, by the power of the sword.

Philip, however, hesitated for a long time before formally declaring war. He waited to see whether the secret plots being hatched in England against Elizabeth's life would rid him of his sister-in-law without any trouble or risk on his part. Many of his great English nobles, and almost a majority of the English people, still belonged to the old faith, and Philip's spies in England encouraged him in the belief that before long there would be a civil war, in which the Protestant Queen and her party would be overwhelmed. But while Philip was waiting for these events he was not loth that English sailors arriving at Spanish forts should be seized as heretics by his merchant captains and handed over to the Holy Inquisition, to be burned at the stake or imprisoned in foul dungeons

for daring to defy the Pope and his Church. By this means he thought that the English people might be brought to see the folly and the danger of Protestantism, and would come back to 'the true fold of the Church' for the sake of peace and commercial prosperity.

So it happened that many a good merchant-ship setting out from Deptford or Bideford or Dartmouth never came home again, and many good women had cause to mourn their husbands, sons, or sweethearts who had been captured by Spanish ships, or in Spanish ports. Sometimes, years afterwards, those who had gone out as strong, brave lads would come back to their English homes broken and crippled in mind and body, bearing cruel scars of torture and chains suffered for conscience' sake in the dungeons of the Inquisition, from which they had escaped to tell the tale. Doubtless, in the telling, these stories were often vastly exaggerated, but the belief that such things could take place had a profound effect upon the imagination of the English people. Those fires which were kindled for the grotesque and ghastly ceremonies of an *auto da fé* at Seville, when English seamen were burnt for no other crime than the possession of a Protestant Bible or Prayer-Book, or for refusing allegiance to the Pope, kindled other fires which blazed fiercely in the breasts of hardy men, and of good wives and mothers, in Elizabethan England; and it is no wonder that 'revenge' against 'the dogs of Spain' became the watchword of our seamen.

Fierce petitions for redress were sent to Queen Elizabeth and her Ministers by those who had suffered outrage from the fanatical Spaniards. Such a letter as that of Dame Seeley, the wife of a Bristol man who had been tortured in the dungeons of the Inquisition, could not have failed to stir the Queen's heart, unemotional as she was. Dorothy Seeley set forth that her husband 'upon most vile, slanderous, spiteful, malicious, and most villainous words uttered against the Queen's Majesty's own person by a certain subject of the King of Spain, not being able to suffer the same, did flee upon

the same slanderous person and gave him a blow; hereupon her said husband, no other offence in respect of their religion there committed, was secretly accused to the *Inquisidores* of the Holy House, and so committed to most vile prison, and there hath remained there now three whole years in miserable state with cruel torments.' Then Dame Dorothy went on to demand that 'the friends of Her Majesty's subjects so imprisoned and tormented in Spain may take out ships at their proper charges, take such Inquisitors or other Papistical subjects of the King of Spain as they can by sea or land, and retain them in prison with such torments and diet as Her Majesty's subjects be kept with in Spain, and on complaint made by the King to give such answer as is now made when Her Majesty sues for subjects imprisoned by the Inquisition, or that a commission be granted to the Archbishop of Canterbury and other Bishops word for word for foreign Papists, as the Inquisitors have in Spain for the Protestants. So that all may know that Her Majesty cannot and will not longer endure the spoils and torments of her subjects, and the Spaniards shall not think this noble realm dares not seek revenge of such importable wrongs.'

Elizabeth, although in entire sympathy with her outraged subjects, did not feel herself in a strong enough position to give 'tit for tat' to Spain, as Dame Seeley suggested. She had no navy, and the Catholic party in her own country, with their plots and intrigues, was a source of serious danger. Spain was too powerful for open defiance. On the other hand, if her private subjects cared to risk their lives and ships in revenge of private wrongs, she was quite ready to turn a blind eye to any such action, especially if they gave her some share of any plunder they might obtain.

With or without her consent there were men in England prepared to 'seek revenge of such importable wrongs.' The Protestant gentlemen of England, inspired by their hatred of Catholic Spain, were eager enough to fight, scuttle, or capture any Spanish ship that ventured near the English coast without

waiting for any formal declaration of war. Among the old families of the west coast, where Protestantism had taken its firmest hold, it became a fashionable thing for the younger sons to fit out small ships, well victualled and well armed, and to patrol the English Channel and the Irish Sea in search of Spanish merchant-ships. From Bideford, Bude, Clovelly, Dartmouth, Exmouth, Plymouth, Lyme Regis, and many another West-Country port, the Tremaynes and Trelawneys, the Staffords and Carews, the Champernownes, the Hawkinses and the Cobhams, the Strangeways and the Seymours—men of good birth and good repute, sailed out in search of adventure, plunder, and revenge against ‘the dogs of Spain.’

It was a rough and cruel age, and if the Spaniards were guilty of barbarous deeds, the English were not one whit more gentle in exacting punishment. The English privateers lying in wait in the shelter of the Scilly Isles, or hiding in the creeks of Kerry, swooped out upon all commerce that passed, and gave short shrift to the crews of Catholic vessels. A Spanish vessel bound from Antwerp to Cadiz, with forty Inquisition prisoners on board, was chased and captured by one of the Cobhams. He took off the prisoners, sank the ship, and sewing up the Spanish captain and crew in their own mainsail, flung them into the sea. This is but one instance of the merciless deeds done by the seamen of England and Spain. Spanish gentlemen taken prisoners were saved from the quick death which was often the fate of their crews, and put up for auction in Cork or Kinsale for the sake of their ransoms. A man of such high rank as Sir Thomas Seymour, brother of the Lord Protector of England in the reign of Edward VI., made no secret of his privateering, and at the very Court of Elizabeth his attendants were adorned with Spanish chains of gold captured from Spanish ships.

Philip II.’s Ambassador in London made strong protests to Elizabeth, and demanded punishment of the offenders. The Queen professed that she was ‘very sorry,’ and would take steps to inquire into the matter. Sometimes she even went so

far as to pretend to be angry at the piratical deeds of her young gentlemen, but she made no scruple, and, indeed, showed considerable anxiety, to receive the lion's share of the rich spoils captured from the great Power with whom outwardly she was at peace. Sometimes when Spanish galleons were towed in triumph up the Thames or into Plymouth Harbour, and the Ambassador of Spain threatened all the terrors of war if it were not instantly released, Her Majesty made very polite apologies, sent down her officers to confiscate the treasures, caused it to be transferred to the Tower, and promised careful inquiry into the deplorable circumstances.

But this inquiry, and others like it, took a surprisingly long time—so long that when the Spanish Armada actually sailed, and war was at last formally declared, there was no need to return any of the captured gold, which, as a matter of fact, had long ago been spent.

Judged by modern and more civilized standards of national honour, this conduct of the Queen would be considered highly immoral, and the gentlemen privateers would be called by the ugly name of pirates or sea-robbers. But one was to remember that although England was not outwardly at war with Spain, Philip II. was plotting against the life and crown of England's Queen, and his subjects were burning, hanging, robbing, and imprisoning English seamen whenever they could do so with safety to themselves. Therefore a state of war did actually exist between the two nations, although their Governments still kept up a vain pretence of friendliness, and we cannot blame the Elizabethan seamen for taking the law into their own hands.

It was a good thing for England that they did so. Had the navy remained in the same condition as when Elizabeth first came to the throne, Philip of Spain's 'Invincible Armada,' when it sailed at last to the English coast, would have been invincible indeed. There would have been no fleet to guard our shores or to resist the great invasion which might have made this country a subject province of Imperial Spain. But

the sea-rovers of Devon and Cornwall formed a great school of seamanship and naval warfare, in which the Drakes, the Grenvilles, the Gilberts, the Raleighs, and other West-Country heroes, learnt those lessons of daring, of adventure, of quick sailing, of sharp-shooting, and, above all, the skilful handling of good ships in all winds and weathers, which ultimately won for this country the supremacy of the sea and laid the foundation of a great Colonial Empire.

For some time the sea-rovers kept pretty close to the Irish Sea and the English Channel, but presently some of them ventured further, and, sailing 'Westward-Ho!' to the Spanish colonies of the New World, were bold enough to attack the gold-laden galleons of Philip II. in those Western waters which he considered the private and sacred highways of his Empire.

The first to carry the English flag to the Spanish ports of the West Indies and South America was that sturdy man of Devon, John Hawkins. He went out at first on a peaceful trading expedition, and he was one of the few English seamen who had been careful to keep on friendly terms with the Spaniards. He had taken part in none of the piratical expeditions of his West-Country friends and relatives, preferring the dangerous, and in the long-run the not less profitable life of legitimate merchant seamen. The idea came to him, however, that instead of trading in English woollens and Spanish spices, he could make more money by carrying living cargoes of negro slaves to the Spanish possessions in the West Indies. Although but half a century had passed since those islands had been colonized by the Spaniards, the natives who had populated them at the time of their discovery had now almost entirely disappeared. Many of them had died by the sword, for the Spaniards were frightfully cruel, even according to the standards of a universally cruel age. But perhaps most of them had succumbed in that mysterious way by which many native races seem unable to thrive and increase after the coming of the white man, falling victims to new diseases and

new vices, from which they had formerly been exempt. So it was that the Spaniards were in great need of slaves to work on the plantations and in the mines of their New World colonies, and already a traffic in negroes, which afterwards developed into the horrors of the African slave-trade, had become a profitable business.

It is not without regret that we must remember John Hawkins as the first Englishman to have a hand in this buying and selling of human beings. It was a dark and horrid stain upon Elizabethan England, and shows that the gradual weakening of mediæval ideals was not wholly for the good.

It was in October, 1562, that Hawkins set sail with three good but small ships, the *Solomon*, the *Swallow*, and the *Jonas*, having on board a hundred men all told. He had a successful voyage to Sierra Leone, on the West Coast of Africa, and there he 'got into his possession, partly by the sword and partly by other means, to the number of 300 negroes at least, beside other merchandize which that country yieldeth.' Well pleased with himself, Hawkins with his little fleet proceeded to the island of Hispaniola, in the West Indies, and boldly sailed into the harbour of San Domingo. The Spaniards were astonished and a little alarmed at his appearance. Never before had an English merchant-ship sailed in those waters, and they feared the wrath of their King if they traded with these audacious foreigners. However, no actual orders had yet arrived from Spain, and the Inquisition had not yet sent its officers to the West Indies to imprison and torture heretics; above all, they were greatly in need of slaves. So the Governor of San Domingo allowed himself to be persuaded that no harm would come of the business, and Hawkins sold his negroes to the planters at a fine profit, receiving full cargoes of pearls, hides, ginger, and sugar.

It happened that in the harbour there was a vessel about to sail for Cadiz, and, knowing that there was a constant demand for hides in Spain, Hawkins thought it would be a good stroke to transfer his newly-acquired hides to that

ship, and to send one of his partners off with it to make a good bargain with the cargo. This was done, and Hawkins then returned safely and successfully to Plymouth.

Here he waited patiently for his partner, but when that gentleman turned up, it was with a gloomy face and many fierce oaths. Upon arriving at Cadiz, the cargo of hides had been instantly confiscated by the Spanish Government, and the partner himself had to fly for his life from the officers of the Inquisition.

Hawkins' fury was unbounded. He wrote indignantly to the Spanish King demanding restitution. But Philip would not give up a hide, and threatened all sorts of things if ever such a thing happened again. Then Hawkins swore he would have his revenge. King of Spain, or no King of Spain, he would go out again, and if the colonial Governors had received orders not to trade with an honest English seaman, he would enforce his bargains if necessary by powder, shot, and sword.

Queen Elizabeth secretly encouraged him. She lent him one of her own ships, the *Jesus*, and with three other small vessels Master Hawkins again set out on a similar venture. Again he got together a number of negroes on the African coast, not without trouble and the loss of some of his men in a fight with the savages. Then once more he appeared in the Caribbean Sea and entered the harbours of the Spanish ports. This time the Governors refused to trade with him. They had received orders from their imperial master, and they dared not disobey, although they badly wanted slaves.

'Very well,' said Master Hawkins, 'if you won't trade peacefully, I will strike my bargain with knocks.' At Borburata he landed 100 men fully armed with arquebuses and pikes, and marched towards the town. The Governor was shocked at this display of force; but he was not a fighting man, and he wanted the slaves, so after some parleying Hawkins had his way. The slaves were sold, and this time no hides were taken, but only solid silver.

At Rio de la Hacha the Governor had received similar orders not to trade with the Englishman. Hawkins used similar persuasion. He prepared to land in his ships' boats, carrying two brass 'falcons' and 'double bases,' as the small cannon of those days were named.

The townsmen marched out in battle array and opposed the landing. Hawkins, 'perceiving them so to brag, commanded the two falcons to be discharged, which put them in no small fear.' At every shot they fell flat to the ground as if killed in a bunch, and finally took to flight. A number of horsemen, however, kept their ground, and coursed up and down with a fine show of courage; but as soon as Hawkins marched towards them with his men, they sent messengers with a flag of truce to know his wishes. 'Then,' said Master Hawkins, 'we made our traffic quietly.' All the slaves were sold in exchange for a goodly store of gold, silver, pearls, and other jewels, and the little English fleet carrying this treasure shaped a homeward track. Winds were contrary, and they were driven out of their course as far as Jamaica, when, after beating about the seas in uncertain fashion, they made for the coast of Florida, ran up the east coast of North America as far as Newfoundland, and after learning a good deal of useful geography, arrived at last at Padstow, in Cornwall, 'with the loss of twenty persons in the whole voyage, and with great profit to the venturers, as well as to the whole realm. God's name, therefore, be praised for evermore. Amen!'

England rang with the name and fame of John Hawkins. Elizabeth was hugely pleased with her share of the profits, and pooh-poohed the vigorous remonstrances of the Spanish Ambassador, who sent off a full narrative of these events to his royal master.

Philip was profoundly disturbed in mind. '*Ojo ! Ojo !*' he wrote in startled ejaculations against the name of Hawkins in the Ambassador's reports: Despatches to the Governors of the Western Colonies were immediately sent off, warning them of the bold and unscrupulous Englishman, and with stern

injunctions to avoid all dealings with him should he venture to their ports again.

Hawkins did venture again. Better for him if he had not, for his third voyage was a disastrous one. When negro-hunting Hawkins lost a number of his men, who were wounded by the poisoned arrows of the natives, and died of lock-jaw. After capturing some 400 slaves, they traded at Rio de la Hacha and other Spanish towns in their old 'peaceful' way, with cannon-shot to back up their bargains. But on passing the western point of Cuba the little fleet was sorely battered about in a tremendous hurricane, and the *Jesus* was 'in so extreme a leak' that it was necessary to seek the shelter of some safe port. Running before the wind, they made for the harbour of San Juan de Ulloa, at the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico.

But it was by no means a safe shelter, as will be seen later. Some Spanish officers came on board with the mistaken idea that these vessels were a part of a Spanish fleet which had been expected for some days past. Hawkins received them courteously, but detained two of the gentlemen as hostages for good behaviour, and, although he put a brave face on the matter, was a little anxious as to what would happen if the expected fleet arrived. In the harbour were twelve plate-ships, laden with enormous treasures; at another time Hawkins would perhaps have transferred their precious cargo to his own ships, but now he thought it wise to go warily, and play for safety. He took possession of a little island at the mouth of the harbour, and mounted cannon to command the entrance of the port. It was none too soon. On the following day thirteen great galleons hove into sight, with the Admiral's flag flying on the foremost vessel. Hawkins immediately sent off a boat to say that he would not permit the fleet to enter until satisfied with their friendly intent to his own ships. The Admiral sent back word to say that it was an unheard-of thing to keep a Spanish fleet from entering a Spanish harbour. But Hawkins had his guns on the island, and no ship could

pass through the narrow entrance without great damage if he gave the word to fire. Accordingly a truce was arranged, twelve hostages were exchanged, and 'commandment was made by sound of trumpet that no one should violate the peace on pain of death.' Thereupon the two fleets saluted each other, and the Spanish galleons came into harbour, past the silent English guns. Hawkins was still anxious. He learnt that the Spanish Admiral was De Bacan, whose hatred of the English was already notorious. Some years before he had captured a number of English merchantmen at Gibraltar, trailed the English flag at his stern, and carried off his prisoners to the Spanish dungeons of the Inquisitions. With such a man there could be no peace if he saw a chance of victory.

These suspicions were verified on the third day.

As Hawkins was sitting at dinner on board the *Jesus*, with a Spaniard named Augustine de Villanova as his guest, shots suddenly sounded across the harbour. The Spaniard pulled a dagger from his sleeve, and made a thrust at the Englishman's heart. Hawkins disarmed him, and rushed on deck. The Spanish galleons and the shore batteries had opened fire on the English ships, and from a great hulk, which in the darkness had crept close to the little *Minion*, 300 Spaniards were leaping on to the deck of that vessel. The *Minion's* men, however, fought gallantly, and, thrusting the enemy overboard, cut their cables and got out of the harbour, followed by the *Judith*, commanded by a young man named Francis Drake. Meanwhile the little island at the entrance had been captured by Spaniards from the mainland, and the English gunners sprang into the sea, swimming to their ships, leaving the cannon to be turned with deadly effect upon the *Jesus*, the *Angel*, and the *Swallow*, which were still inside the harbour.

The crews of these vessels fought like heroes under the leadership of Hawkins, who, through the shots and yells, roared encouragement to his men. 'God and St. George upon these traitorous villains!' he cried, and with his devoted

sailors thrust back the boarders time and time again, while the gunners poured unceasing volleys into the great hulks of the galleons around them. Although so vastly outnumbered, in one hour these three small English ships had sunk the Spanish Admiral's flagship and another vessel close by, while the Spanish Vice-Admiral's galleon was a burning wreck. In the middle of the fight Hawkins, hoarse with long shouting and choking with the reek of gunpowder, called for a cup of beer. As he lifted the silver flagon a shot dashed it to pieces.

'God,' said he, 'who has preserved me from this shot, will preserve us from these traitors and villains!'

But there was no chance of victory against such odds. The *Jesus* was but a battered and riddled hulk, unable to move out of the way of two foreships which now came floating alongside. Hawkins gave the order to take to the long-boat. All the gold and precious stones in the hold of the *Jesus*—the whole profits of his long voyage—had to be abandoned. Worse still, some of the crew had to be left behind to the mercy of the Spaniards, 'which,' says Hawkins, 'I doubt was very little.' Every man rowing for dear life, the boat dashed between the galleons and out into the open water, where Hawkins and the survivors were taken on board the *Minion*.

This and the *Judith* were the only two ships to escape. The others remained in the hands of the Spaniards, and with them many poor English seamen who would never again see merry Bideford or stroll on Plymouth Hoe. Young Francis Drake and the men of the *Judith* got home in December of 1568, ruined for the time being, but vowing vengeance on the Spaniards.

The *Minion* was not so fortunate. She was overcrowded, and ploughed heavily through a gale which broke over her, and at last, when the men were starving, she was run ashore on the coast of Tabasco, in the Gulf of Mexico. Here a hundred men by their own wish were left behind to seek food inland. Eventually these poor fellows were captured by Spaniards, and suffered fearful tortures in South American

prisons before being handed over to the Inquisition. Some were then burnt as heretics, others died on the rack, and only one man escaped after many years to tell the awful tale. Hawkins struggled homewards, his men dying like flies from hunger and disease, so that when he reached England at last there were few survivors of that terrible voyage.

Mention has already been made of one Francis Drake, who commanded the *Judith* in this ill-fated expedition. This young Devonshire man, a square-faced, blue-eyed fellow with chestnut hair, was as yet without fame, and his fortune consisted only of the little *Judith*, which he had inherited from an old West-Country skipper whom he had formerly served as an apprentice in the coasting trade. He had ventured his all when he had joined his kinsman Hawkins, and when he had returned to Plymouth without profit, his heart was bitterly inflamed against the Spaniards for their treachery at San Juan de Ulloa. But what increased his hatred for them most was not his own loss, but the thought that so many of his comrades were at the mercy of the Inquisition. He made a solemn vow that he would never rest until he had rescued these men from the hands of their persecutors, or if that was impossible, until he had exacted vengeance to the full for all their sufferings. Staunch, fanatical Protestant as he was, and hating all Catholics alike, it seemed to him not only good patriotism, but even a work of God, to kill a Spaniard whenever opportunity offered, and he resolved that as long as his life lasted he would devote it to the destruction of his country's enemies in whatever part of the world he might find them. Single-handed, if necessary, he would defy the might of Spain.

Such was the daring and audacious spirit of the man who in May, 1552, five years after his voyage with Hawkins, set out from Plymouth with but seventy-three men in two small ships called the *Pasha* and the *Swan*, and on July 29 hove-to off Nombre de Dios, on the Isthmus of Panama, in South America.* In this town was stored a vast amount of treasure waiting to be shipped to Spain, and Drake promised his men

that some of it at least should be theirs if they would follow him with stout heart. His Devonshire lads answered with a cheer. They would follow him to the gates of death.

On a bright moonlight night, leaving but a few men on the two ships, Drake and the others pushed off in small boats, and landed silently in front of the unwallled town. No alarm was raised, and with pikes shouldered and bows and arrows ready, this little company of adventurers marched into the market-place. Then they were discovered, and sleepy Spanish soldiers came rushing out to the beat of drum, full of wonder and alarm. Shots were fired at the band of English sailors, who sent back a flight of arrows. Drake was wounded in the leg, and soon felt faint from loss of blood. But he pretended it was a mere scratch, knowing that 'if the general's heart stoops, the men's will fall.' He led them to the Government House, where the silver was stored, and told them that there was the treasury of the world, and they might help themselves. But at these words his sight and strength failed, and he fell back in a swoon. His men, reckoning all the treasure of the world as nothing compared to Drake's own life, carried him back to the beach, hotly pursued by Spaniards, who had now discovered how small the English force was, and had recovered from their first confusion and alarm.

Drake, having regained his ships and recovered some of his strength, sailed along the coast of Panama, and on the way captured some Spanish merchant-ships heavily laden with provisions. Then he put into a creek, and had a spell on shore while his wound was healing. During this time the English sailors made friends with some Cimaroons, or negro slaves, who had escaped from their Spanish masters, and were living a wild life in the woods. They hated the Spaniards for their cruelties, and were, therefore, all the more friendly to the English. They offered to guide Drake and his men to a narrow pass where they could surprise a Spanish caravan laden with treasure on its way to Nombre de Dios.

Drake gladly consented, and as soon as they came near the

pass they heard 'the sweet music of the mules coming with a great noise of bells.' Then, presently, as they crouched in the long grass, they caught sight of a long train of pack-mules heavily laden and guarded only by a few muleteers. With loud shouts Drake and his men sprang from their ambush. The Spaniards fled, and all the rich booty fell into the hands of the English sailors—gold, silver, and jewels.

It was at this time that Drake first saw the Great Pacific. The chief of his Cimaroons led him to a hill on which stood a tall tree, and Drake, climbing up, gazed upon the golden rippling waters stretching away to the west. Pirate as he was, rough sailor and adventurer, his heart was stirred with a great enthusiasm, and, baring his head, he 'besought Almighty God of His goodness to grant him leave and life to sail once in an English ship to that sea.'

But now he was in haste to get back, and dared not venture by unknown ways with so great a treasure in his care. On the homeward journey he captured other Spanish ships with valuable cargoes, burnt the town of Porto Bello, and at last, after this amazing voyage, reached Plymouth on Sunday, August 9, 1573, during sermon time.

'The news of his return,' says an old chronicler, 'did so speedily pass over all the church, and surpassed their minds with desire and delight to see him, that very few or none remained with the preacher, all hastening to see the evidence of God's love and blessing towards our gracious Queene and country.'

Four years later Francis Drake fitted out another small squadron of five vessels for a second expedition against the Spanish possessions. Things went badly at first. There was an attempt at mutiny on board one of the ships, and Thomas Doughty, the ringleader, was executed. Two ships were burned, as they were found to hamper the speed of their companions; and when they entered the Strait of Magellan, at the bottom of South America, a violent tempest raged for sixty-two days, during which one of the three remaining ships

—the *Marigold*—sank with all hands, and another—the *Elizabeth*—commanded by Admiral Winter, deserted and returned home. Drake was now alone with his crew on the *Golden Hinde*, and when the gale abated he steered northwards, reaching the Spanish port of Valparaiso. He was in desperate need of food, but in this harbour he found a number of store-houses along the quayside practically unguarded. The garrison had never dreamed that any English ship could come their way, and Drake took as many stores as he needed without the loss of a man. Continuing his journey, he fell in with a great treasure-ship off Cape Francisco, and captured it after a short sharp fight. A month later he had the same good luck, and again the hold of the *Golden Hinde* was enriched with a store of gold, precious stones, and spices.

Drake now made up his mind to do that thing which he had prayed that God might grant him when he had stood by the side of the Cimaroon on the hill at Panama: he would sail home across the great Pacific, which yet no English keel had ploughed. For sixty-eight days he had no sight of land, until it seemed to his crew that never again would they see the solid earth, but sail for ever upon the endless sea. At last they reached the Pelew Islands, in the East Indies; and after refreshing themselves at Ternate for three weeks, and refitting their ship on the south-west coast of Java, they got on board the gallant little *Golden Hinde* once more, with her head for the Cape of Good Hope. It was on September 26, 1580, that Francis Drake's ship was sighted off Plymouth Hoe, to the great joy and amazement of the people, who had long given him up as lost. The fame of the first Englishman to sail round the world rang throughout the length and breadth of the country, and stirred the whole nation to an immense enthusiasm.

Queen Elizabeth herself was struck with admiration for Drake's genius and daring. Like her father, 'she loved a man.' For a time she hesitated how to receive him. The Spanish Ambassador was already pestering her with indignant

protests and demands for the instant punishment of 'El Drake'—the Dragon, as he was called by the Spanish people, who looked upon him as one of the devil's own friends. Elizabeth was afraid that if she gave any outward sign of favour to Francis Drake it might lead at once to that war which had been so long looming ahead, but which she wished to postpone as long as possible. Still, war or no war, she could not ignore the most wonderful voyage and the most daring exploits ever achieved by one of her subjects. Drake had brought up the *Golden Hinde* to Deptford, where thousands of people went down to gaze at it with wonder; and to Deptford went Elizabeth, after seven months' uncertainty, and knighted Francis Drake on the deck of his own good ship.

The sea-captain's next achievements were not less daring nor less wonderful than those already related. In 1585 he commanded a fleet of twenty-five ships, sacking Spanish towns and capturing Spanish ships in the West Indies and along the South American coast. These audacities so stirred the Spanish people to anger that Philip II. was at last forced to put down his 'leaden foot' and hurry forward the preparations for the 'great enterprise' against England. The dockyards of Spain resounded with the hammers of the shipwrights building an 'Armada' which would carry over an enormous army to these shores. But Drake had again to be reckoned with. No sooner had a portion of this Spanish fleet assembled in the harbour of Cadiz than he set out with a strong squadron upon a 'merrie sport,' which he called 'singeing the King of Spain's beard.' He sailed straight to Cadiz, and with a daring and genius only equalled in the history of the sea by the heroic Nelson of a future century, he entered the harbour and sank or burned no less than thirty-three of the great Spanish battle-ships which were waiting for the men who were to invade this country, passing out again unscathed. It was a fearful blow to Spain, but her wealth was enormous, and this time Philip II. was so infuriated that even his slow, deliberate, and hesitating mind was goaded into activity. Before another year had

passed another Armada was in readiness, and from all parts of Spain gathered the flower of her chivalry to take part in the invasion of England. Not a noble family in Spain but sent a son to share in the expected glory of conquest, and the blessings of the Church were bestowed upon the banners and crosses for 'the holy war against the heretics.'

There is no need to tell again the story of the 'Invincible Armada.' It belongs to English History rather than to the story of the Empire. Drake and a gathering of English captains, many of those men who in their youth had been the sea-rovers of the Channel and the Irish Sea, were on Plymouth Hoe when the news was brought that the Spanish Fleet had been sighted off the Lizard. Sir Francis Drake, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Lord Howard of Effingham, the Admiral, were playing their famous game of bowls. Lord Howard was eager to get to work, but Drake, with characteristic coolness, made that remark so dear to the hearts of Englishmen, 'There is plenty of time to win the game and thrash the Spaniards too.'

Then the great battle was fought which shattered the power of Spain and made England the mistress of the seas. Our ships were handled by men who had learnt how to make the most of a wind, and our guns were fired by men who had fought in many a duel between English barque and Spanish galleon. Powder and shot were scarce—for this the Government was to blame—but none was wasted. Darting about the great unwieldy ships of Spain, so high above the water that their guns could seldom get at an angle low enough to strike the little English vessels, our fleet sent forth its broadsides with deadly effect, shattering the Spanish hulks, until many of them were soon mere splintered wrecks or floating bonfires. The Duke of Medina Sidonia, a poor, harmless gentleman who knew nothing of the sea or ships, but who, for some inscrutable reason, had been chosen by Philip to command the Armada, despairing of victory, which might yet have been his if he had relinquished his command to some more daring captain in his fleet, decided to make his best way back to Spain round by the

Orkneys. Our ships chased him up the Channel, hanging upon his flanks like gad-flies. Then, when at last they had to fall back for want of ammunition, the wind took up the English cause, and a great gale swept the flying fleet of Spain to destruction. Numbers of the vessels were wrecked upon the west coast of Ireland, the unhappy Spaniards being butchered by those belonging to Irish tribes. Others sank with all hands, and the Duke of Medina Sidonia returned to his King and his country with but a miserable remnant of the high-spirited and confident host who had gone forth from Spain so short a time before.

This great victory destroyed at one blow the sea-power of Spain. The Spaniards never recovered from the annihilation of the 'Invincible Armada.' In the years following that great event in the history of the world, Drake and others finished their work by a systematic destruction of shipping along the coasts of Spain and Portugal, until the sailors of Philip II, feared the very name of 'El Drake' as that of a fierce-breathing dragon who came to slay and devour, and whom no earthly power could withstand.

England had risen during the past thirty years from a nation without a navy to absolute supremacy of the sea. There was no ocean highway now which could be barred to English seamen, and no Holy Inquisition would dare to lay a finger on them into whatsoever port they sailed. From those early sea-rovers a great tradition of daring and heroism had been bequeathed to the memory of the nation, worth more in the building up of the British Empire than all the gold-mines of Spanish South America. An English sailor had circum-navigated the globe. Upon English charts were the secrets of the New World, so long and jealously guarded by the Spaniards and Portuguese. The men of Devon and Cornwall had, in fact, learnt a great deal of geography, and the time was not far off when that knowledge would be turned to good account in laying the first foundations of our colonies and Empire.

CHAPTER IV

RALEIGH'S DREAM OF EMPIRE

ALTHOUGH Elizabethan seamen had carried the English flag across the great waters of the world, and two of them—Sir Francis Drake and Sir Thomas Cavendish—had actually circumnavigated the globe, the majority of them had not been inspired in their daring exploits by any idea of colonizing the newly-discovered countries, or of founding an English Empire beyond the seas. To shatter the power of Spain, to seek revenge for 'importable wrongs,' to capture Spanish treasure, were the sole objects they had in view, and they achieved them, as we have seen, with triumphant success.

One man there was, however, in Elizabethan England who had a larger and nobler ambition. This was Sir Walter Raleigh, the Queen's favourite. A Devonshire man, like so many of the great seamen of his time, Raleigh was of a different type to his West-Country friends and relatives. He had more imagination, more polish and charm of manner, and was of more cultured education than such gallant but rough-and-ready sailors as Francis Drake and John Hawkins. Scholar and poet, yet a man of action and a born leader of men, it was no wonder that he fascinated Queen Elizabeth. His courtly and extravagant adulation of her touched her heart with something like a real love passion, and she heaped honours and fortunes upon him with a prodigality which aroused the jealousy of her other courtiers. But the office of Queen's favourite had its dangers and its disadvantages. The Queen brooked no rival in her affections, and demanded a constant and close attendance. Raleigh's secret marriage with Elizabeth Throgmorton disgraced him for a time with his Royal mistress, and throughout his career his action was hampered by the jealousy of the Queen, who, except when she clapped him in prison or sent him to his country seats as a

sign of her displeasure, could not bear him from her side for long.

But Raleigh in favour or in disgrace had an object in life greater and nobler than the personal and more selfish ambitions which also possessed him. It was his ardent desire to establish colonies of Englishmen in the New World, which in time would develop into free and prosperous nations under the English flag, bound by indestructible ties to the mother-country from whom they sprang, adding to the wealth and glory of their parent isle, and forming a united Colonial Empire. Raleigh, indeed, was the first to possess that 'imperial idea' which was to animate so many great Englishmen of future generations. He spent a large part of his fortune and the best efforts of his life to carry into effect this great dream, which he dedicated 'To her who is the first, and may be justly called,' as he said, 'the Empress of the Bretanes.'

Raleigh's first attempts to colonize North America were, unhappily, not conducted under his own active command, for the Queen was too enamoured with him to let him risk his life even for the sake of enlarging her dominions. But Raleigh found the money and the man whom he could entrust to carry out his scheme with daring and sagacity. This was his half-brother, Humphrey Gilbert, who had already gained an honourable reputation in the story of the sea by his voyages in the Arctic regions in search of the North-West Passage to the Indies.

Gilbert, therefore, with Raleigh's influence and money behind him, obtained a patent from the Queen 'for the discovery of sundry rare and unknown lands, fatally, and it seemed by God's Providence, reserved for England, and for the honour of Her Majesty.'

Elaborate instructions and agreements were drawn up for the benefit and guidance of these first English colonists. Each man of humble birth going out by free passage was to receive 60 acres of land, besides a share of common land for cattle ;

every man who paid his own passage, and took a sword and arquebus, was to have six score acres of land; while a gentleman with five followers would be allowed as much as 2,000 acres. There were also minute instructions for clearing the ground, building houses, and constructing townships, with many quaint and medieval conditions which now read strangely to us.

Raleigh built a ship of his own called the *Bark-Raleigh* to accompany the little fleet bound on this great enterprise, and he wished to command the vessel in person; but at the eleventh hour he was prevented by the Queen, to his bitter disappointment. The Queen, however, so far favoured the expedition as to send an encouraging message to Humphrey Gilbert, who now took command.

'Her Highness,' wrote Raleigh to his brother, 'willed me to send you worde that she wished you as great good hap and safety to your ship, as if her sealf were ther in person.'

Sir Humphrey Gilbert, however, met with nothing but disaster. His fleet had hardly got outside the Channel before the crew of the *Bark-Raleigh*, among whom a contagious disease had broken out, mutinied and took the ship back to port. With his four other vessels, Gilbert, on the *Squirrel*—a little cockle-shell of 40 tons—reached the crest of Newfoundland. Although John Cabot had taken possession of it in the name of England almost a century before, Gilbert, knowing perhaps little or nothing of that former expedition, again claimed it for the English Crown by the old ceremony of cutting a sod and accepting a hazel wand. The raising of the English flag was witnessed without protest by the skippers of a number of foreign fishing-boats, who were off the coast, and accepted Gilbert's invitation to be present. The English crews, however, turned out to be a shocking gang of ruffians, and tried to plunder the foreigners' boats; others pretended to be ill, and had to be sent home in the *Swallow*; some actually died from scurvy.

It was a bad beginning, but worse was to follow. Leaving

Newfoundland and sailing southwards along the North American coast, another ship, the *Delight*, ran on a bank and was wrecked. The two other vessels, the *Golden Hinde* and the tiny *Squirrel*, upon which Gilbert flew his flag, were fearfully battered about in a great tempest, the crews, stricken with disease, losing heart and hope. The men of the *Golden Hinde* sent word beseeching Sir Humphrey to leave the *Squirrel*, overloaded as it was, for the greater safety of their own ship. But Gilbert said, 'I will not forsake my little company, with whom I have passed through so many perils.' Those on the *Golden Hinde* saw him sitting with a calm face in the stern of his small ship, with the Bible in his hand, and as they drew nearer to him on one occasion, he called out in a hearty voice, 'Be of good heart, my friends; we are as near to heaven by sea as by land.'

So the first attempt to found a colony failed disastrously. Raleigh, however, was not daunted. Adrian Gilbert took his brother's place, but before sending out a new batch of colonists, Raleigh despatched Captains Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlow to reconnoitre the proposed settlement. They reached the coast of Florida in safety, and, sailing southwards, discovered an island called by the natives Wokeken. These natives received him peacefully, and exchanged pearls, coral, and skins for common objects offered by the English. One of the chiefs fell in love with a tin dish, which he hung from his neck as a shield. 'He had,' said the captains, 'a great liking for our armour, a sword, and divers other things which we had, and offered to lay a great box of pearls in gage for them. But we refused it for this time . . . because we would not make them know we esteemed thereof until we understood in what places of the country the pearls grew.'

The captains returned to Raleigh with some of the pearls 'as big as pease,' two native chiefs, who caused great wonderment in London, and a glowing account of the fertile soil of the new land. Raleigh was well satisfied with his report, and lost no time in equipping a new expedition for 'an English

nation beyond the seas,' as he called it, somewhat prematurely.

This fleet of seven ships set sail from Plymouth on April 9, 1585. It was commanded by Sir Richard Grenville, the hero of that great fight off the Azores, when for thirteen hours the *Revenge* kept at bay no less than fifty-three Spanish battle-ships. Among the other leaders were Ralph Lane, one of Queen Elizabeth's equerries, who was to be Governor of the new colonies; Thomas Cavendish, the second Englishman to sail round the world; Captain Amadas; John Arundel; Sir Lewis Stukley Hariot, a distinguished man of science, and other well-known gentlemen of the time. There were also a hundred intending settlers of the new colony, which, in honour of the Queen, and by her suggestion, was to be called Virginia.

The little squadron, after a roundabout course and some misadventures, reached its destination, the island of Wokeken, on June 26. Here they landed with their stores, and, under the direction of Ralph Lane, the 'Governor,' at once began to clear the ground and build wooden houses. Thus was established at last the first English colony in the New World.

Two months later Sir Richard Grenville left the colonists and sailed to England, capturing on his way a great Spanish 'carrack,' containing a rich treasure of pearls.

All went well for a time with the little colony. Ralph Lane and a party explored and took possession of the coast as far as Chesapeake Bay to the north, and eighty miles south of Roanoke, at which place an outpost of fifteen Englishmen was left behind. In the course of nearly a year crops were cultivated and grew to the promise of a fine harvest, and from the natives the colonists learnt the use of tobacco and the value of potatoes, both of which were afterwards introduced into England under the patronage of Walter Raleigh.

Ralph Lane sent home glowing reports. 'We have discovered,' he said, 'so many rare and singular commodities that no State in Christendom do yield better or more plentiful, and the ship's freight we are sending will prove I do not lie.'

As the months went by, however, an unsatisfactory state of

things began to prevail. The colonists quarrelled among themselves, and, while waiting for the crops to ripen, food was so scarce that there was some danger of starvation unless a store-ship which Raleigh had promised to send speedily arrived. The men were attacked by acute home-sickness. As yet the true spirit of colonizing had not struck root into English hearts. So it happened that when, by a singular chance, Francis Drake arrived from harassing the Spanish West Indies with a strong and well-provisioned fleet, the yearning to see England once more was too much for the Virginian settlers, and, without waiting for Raleigh's store-ship, which was now almost due, they one and all clamoured for Drake to take them on board his homeward-bound vessel.

So once again Raleigh's dream of Empire was unfulfilled, and only the little band of fifteen men at Roanoak remained as a sign of English dominion in the New World.

But Raleigh was a man of indomitable character, and not yet would he own himself beaten. Once again in April, 1587, he sent out 100 new colonists, under the leadership of a Mr. John White. They proceeded at first to Roanoak to relieve the little outpost there. Alas! no man remained of them. Only the ruins of wooden houses, already overgrown with vegetation, remained as a sign of former habitation. It was afterwards found that they had all been massacred by Indians; whether it was in some measure their own fault we know not. Perhaps in this case, as in later times, the white men were first aggressors. But be that as it may, they were the first to fall beneath the tomahawks of the North American Indians, and began that long reign of bloodshed between 'pale-faces' and 'redskins' which forms a terrible narrative in the history of the English in the New World.

It was, though they knew it not at the time, an ill omen for Raleigh's new colonists. But they began work with a good heart, and the birth of a little girl to Governor White's daughter, Elizabeth Dare, was celebrated with much jubilation. This first English child born on American soil was

christened Virginia. Mr. White himself, at the request of his own people, but against his own will, returned to England to obtain fresh food-supplies. His misgivings were unhappily fulfilled. Never again did he see his family or his friends in Virginia.

He reached England just as the Spanish Armada was about to sail, and every English ship was requisitioned for the national defence. It was some time before Raleigh was able to send relief to the Virginian settlers, and then Governor White's store-ship was attacked and plundered by French pirates. Raleigh had already spent £40,000 out of his own pocket on his colonial enterprises, but at enormous cost he equipped no less than five expeditions to carry help to his people in Virginia. When at last the colony was reached it was too late for help. Like the outpost at Roanoak, the settlers in 'England beyond the seas' had all been murdered by the redskins.

This time Raleigh could try no more. His successive disasters so discouraged the Queen and her Ministers, and the English people as a whole, that they would give him no help and no encouragement in his great scheme. He himself did not quite abandon hope. 'I shall yet live to see it a free nation,' he wrote. And so he did, but, alas! from a prison cell.

He turned to a new country for exploration, and endeavoured to refill his somewhat exhausted treasury, and to regain the confidence of his countrymen, by discovering the fabulous city of gold believed to exist in the heart of tropical Guiana. There is no room here to tell of Raleigh's romantic adventures in that region—of his long journeys, his many perils, his bitter disappointments, the loss of his only son, his sickness and despair, and final ruin, in quest of 'El Dorado,' the Golden Land of which he had been told by lying natives and treacherous guides. He returned to England as a prisoner, and, condemned to death for no crime by the base and cowardly successor of Queen Elizabeth, the great and patriotic English-

man, the great founder of our Empire, laid 'his wise white head' upon the block, and died with the heroic courage which won the admiration of even his bitterest enemies.

Although his attempts to found a 'New England' in America had failed so disastrously, to him belongs the great and memorable honour of being the first of our race inspired with the great vision of empire, and of having led the way to its realization.

PART II

THE NEW WORLD

CHAPTER V

EARLY ENGLISH SETTLEMENTS IN NORTH AMERICA

WHEN Sir Walter Raleigh lay a prisoner in the Tower of London, his Virginian territories, which he had endeavoured to colonize at so great a cost, were claimed by James I. as possessions of the Crown. The King was cunning enough to see that, although Raleigh's efforts had ended in failure, others might have better fortune, if the great vision of an Empire beyond the seas—with which Raleigh had tried to inspire his countrymen—might still encourage English adventurers to risk their lives and money in new attempts at colonization.

Such men, in fact, were still to be found. A number of gentlemen and traders who had inherited the traditions of the Elizabethans formed themselves into two societies, called the London and the Plymouth Virginia Companies, and obtained the same grants which Raleigh had previously possessed to colonize along the North American coast.

The leading spirit of the first expedition sent out by these trading companies was Captain John Smith. This man had all the characteristics of the Elizabethan adventurers—daring, shrewdness, a consummate knowledge of seamanship, a love of peril for its own sake, a power of commanding men, perfect coolness, and readiness of resource in the very teeth of danger

—and for half a life-time he had been a soldier of fortune or a sea-rover, fighting under many different flags, and learning to look death in the face without much fear in many different countries. Upon his return to England, after this wandering, eventful life, he had fallen in with Henry Hudson, the Arctic explorer, afterwards famous as the discoverer of Hudson's Bay, and with a certain sea-captain named Bartholomew Gosnold, who had explored the country of Virginia. It was from these men that John Smith became fired with the idea of helping to found a colony in the New World.

It was at the end of the year 1606 that the little fleet equipped by the new Virginia Company was ready to sail. It consisted of three small ships—the *Susan Constant*, commanded by Captain Newport; the *Godspeed*, under Bartholomew Gosnold; and a pinnace of only 20 tons, under Captain Ratcliffe. Among the men on board were some carpenters, labourers, and blacksmiths, but also many gentlemanly young sparks, who went out 'for the fun of the thing,' but with no idea of discipline or hard work. John Smith himself went as a 'gentleman adventurer' and adviser.

His advice, however, seems to have been of too domineering a character to please the young gentlemen, who, with none of his experience, thought they knew twice as much. Quarrels broke out on board, and early in the voyage Captain Smith was clapped in irons and kept a close prisoner until the vessels reached the coast of Virginia. They were driven by a storm into Chesapeake Bay, and landed on a promontory which they called Cape Henry, in honour of the eldest son of James I., who was a patron of the expedition.

That night, as darkness came on, they were attacked by a band of Indians, who came down the hill to the water's edge on all fours, carrying their bows and arrows in their mouths. The savages discharged a flight of arrows at the English, wounding two of them, but they fled back to the woods with fearful shrieks when they were answered with a volley of powder and shot,

During the next few weeks the adventurers pushed further inland, looking for a suitable spot upon which to found their little colony. This they at last decided to establish at the mouth of the James River, as they called it, where the land gave every prospect of successful cultivation. They again came in contact with the native Indians, and this time no hostility was shown on either side. The Indian chief, in return for the present of a hatchet from Captain Newport, gave his permission for the 'pale-faces' to take possession of the land they wanted; and when his warriors grumbled with him for parting with his territory so easily, he is reported to have given the philosophical answer: 'Why should you be offended with them as long as they hurt you not, nor take anything away by force? They take but a little waste ground which doth you nor any of us any good.'

The adventurers quickly got to work. They cleared the ground and, as a protection against the savages, built a rough kind of fort with palisades in the form of a triangle, guarded by guns at each corner. Taking time by the forelock, they discussed the best name to give to the town yet unbuilt, and unanimously decided to call it Jamestown, after the King.

The first signs of friendliness from the Indians were not to be trusted, as was soon found with bitter results. While Captain Newport, with John Smith and about twenty companions, set out to explore the upper reaches of the James River, those who remained behind, foolishly careless of precautions, were suddenly attacked by the natives. Mr. Wingfield, one of the gentlemen, who had been made President of the new colony—in those days titles were generally bigger than the power they carried—narrowly escaped death from an arrow which stuck through his beard; one lad was killed and seventeen men seriously wounded. When the guns got to work, however, the Indian warriors promptly retreated.

It was a bad beginning, but worse things were to come. As the summer advanced the colonists were stricken with fever, and the corn which they had brought with them from England

went mouldy, so that food began to be very scarce. The young gentlemen who had come out to taste the joys of adventure found the taste was not so sweet as they had anticipated. They hated John Smith and the other leaders who wanted to set them to hard work ; they loafed about instead of helping to build up a stronghold against the savages, and they formed little factions against one or other of their officers. The quarrels were constant and violent.

President Wingfield was deposed on the charge that he consumed more than his fair share of the stores, and Captain Ratcliffe was put up in his stead. A man named Kendall was accused of conspiracy and hanged. Yet men were dying fast enough without the need of hanging ! In six weeks forty-six men had fallen victims to the pestilence, and five had been slain by Indians. Their bodies lay about the fort until they were dragged out in batches of three or four at a time, and buried at night like dogs. Captain Gosnold was one of those who succumbed, and John Smith himself was sick unto death. Fortunately for the others, Smith recovered, and tenderly nursed Ratcliffe and other men who had been his greatest enemies, until they, too, were out of danger.

Among all that band of adventurers, it is Captain John Smith who stands out with any heroism. He became the life and soul of the little colony. In their wretchedness, the survivors recognised his authority to lead them, and for a time were inclined to obey him. He would have no idlers. He set them to clear the ground, build log houses, and cultivate the soil, always, it is said, 'bearing the greatest task for his own share.' He established more friendly relations with the Indians, and bartered with them for corn. On one occasion he went on a short journey down the James River to an Indian village, where he had heard there was a large store of grain. The place seemed deserted, but suddenly Smith and his seven men were attacked by sixty or seventy young warriors smeared over with paint of white and red, who came out of the woods with brandished clubs and wild war-cries, carrying before them

a hideous wooden idol. Smith gave the order to fire. Four savages fell, and with them their painted doll. The others fled, but soon returned with a humble request for the return of their sacred idol. Captain Smith saw at once that the painted image was worth a treasure to him. He promised to give it up provided only that six unarmed natives should come forward and load his boat with corn, and any other provisions they might have. So in a little while the Indians came loaded with venison, turkeys, and bread. The boat was filled until it could hold no more in safety, and Captain Smith then returned the idol with a few presents, and, parting from the natives with signs of goodwill, returned to the fort with his welcome supplies.

Not long after this Captain Smith set out on another journey, this time to explore one of the tributaries of the James River, called the Chickahominy. He took about a dozen men with him, and a good supply of beads, hatchets, and other things to barter with the redskins. After travelling up the river for some fifty miles they were stopped by the undergrowth, and John Smith decided to push on in a canoe with two men named Robinson and Emry. He gave instructions that the others were not to stray away from the boat, as there was no knowing how many Indians might be concealed in the woods. These orders were disregarded, and no sooner was their Captain's back turned than the men went on shore to shoot wild birds. Before long they were attacked by the wild men of the woods. Perceiving their danger before it was yet too late, the reckless fellows made a rush for the boat, and all but one reached it in safety. A man named George Cassen fell into the hands of the savages. They demanded to know in what direction his captain had gone, and the unhappy wretch, wishing to save his life, pointed out the way. But this did not avail him, and he suffered a horrible death. They first scalped and skinned him, then lashed him to a tree and burnt him alive.

Meanwhile Captain Smith and his companions, unaware of this tragedy, had made their way up the river for some dis-

tance with the assistance of two Indians, who agreed to act as guides in return for the presents promised them. The little party went on shore to cook some food, and while dinner was preparing, Smith wandered off a little way with one of the guides to examine the soil, telling Robinson and Emry to fire a musket if any redskins appeared on the scene. Before many minutes had passed Smith heard the danger-signal. Quick as thought, he whipped off his garter, and fastened the guide's arm to his left wrist, to guard against treachery. Then he made a dash towards the canoe. But it was too late. A shower of arrows fell about him, and a band of some 200 redskins, who had silently surrounded him when he had been unconscious of danger, sprang from behind the trees, brandishing their tomahawks. He used his native guide as a target to shield his body from the arrows, and killed two of his enemies before he was overpowered by such hopeless odds. His life was spared for a time, as being 'the chief of the pale-faces'; they thought him worthy of more than ordinary ceremony and death-tortures. While they were parleying among themselves, he managed to give them the slip, and, being a fast runner, might have got clear away had he not got on to boggy ground, in which he sank up to his waist before he was rescued from this more merciful form of death.

He was carried back to the fire where he had left his two companions, and here, to his great grief, he saw the body of Robinson pierced with many arrows.

Captain Smith remained prisoner in the hands of this Indian tribe for many months. He managed to save his life by setting up as a 'medicine man,' doing all sorts of tricks, which persuaded his captors of his miraculous powers. Finally, he was taken before the overlord or chief of the whole tribe, by name Powhatan. The story that follows has been told often enough before, but it remains the most picturesque incident in the early history of Virginia.

When John Smith stood before the old Indian chief and all his braves, he noticed a young native girl standing at the side

of Powhatan, and in spite of his great danger, he was impressed, he said afterwards, by the beauty and simplicity of the Indian maiden, and by the wonder and pity with which she looked at him. He could not understand what was being said by his captors, who seemed to be relating his story and debating his fate, but when two flat stones were placed on the ground before him, and two young warriors stepped forward with heavy clubs, he realized only too well he was condemned to death. At that moment, however, the young girl at Powhatan's side sprang out of the circle of the chiefs, and with a loud cry flung her arms about the Englishman. This action caused the greatest astonishment and excitement among the Indians, and after a long palaver, Captain John Smith was reprieved from death and treated with strange ceremony and respect. Then he learnt that he owed his escape to the young girl, who was Pocahontas, the daughter of Powhatan, who had ransomed the prisoner's life, according to an old Indian custom, by claiming him as a husband.

Some doubts have been cast upon this famous tale, for which we only have Captain Smith's own words, as he related it afterwards in the narrative of his life. But whether true or not—and it is probable that the whole story of Pocahontas was somewhat highly coloured and idealized by the hero who put it into writing—it has taken its place in history like the story of King Alfred and the cakes, and other picturesque legends which stir the imagination more powerfully than events of greater importance.

According to John Smith, Pocahontas was his good angel not once only, but on several other occasions, and when he was allowed to return to Jamestown under a guard of Powhatan's braves, Pocahontas, 'the beautiful savage,' used often to come to visit the man who was her 'husband' by native law, bringing with her supplies of food, which helped to keep the little colony from the starvation constantly threatening it.

Some years afterwards, when John Smith had returned to England, Pocahontas married an Englishman named John

Rolfe, who took her to London. Here she was more than a nine days' wonder. Dressed as an English lady in a stiff ruff and hoop petticoat, she was introduced to King James and his Queen, and became a great favourite with the Court ladies. Here once again she met the man whose life she had saved. She had been told he was dead, and her emotion when she greeted him was very great. He treated her with the respect due to the fine Court lady she had become, but with an abrupt gesture she turned away and hid her face in her hands.

Some amusing stories are told of a young Indian named Hatomakkin, who had come over with the Princess Pocahontas. He had been commanded by the chief Powhatan to make an accurate record of the number of people in England by notching a stick for everyone he met. His stick, however, was not long enough for the first few minutes after his arrival at Plymouth, and he soon gave up his task in despair.

He had also been particularly instructed to see the God of the English, and was much disappointed when he was told that this was impossible. He was equally disappointed with the English King, whom he did not think was half as king-like as Powhatan.

Poor Pocahontas did not thrive in the damp climate of England, and died before she could be taken back to her own country. She was buried at Greenwich, where her tomb may be seen to this day.

All this, however, has but little to do with the story of the Virginia colony, to which we must now return.

When Captain John Smith went back to Jamestown after his captivity in the Indian villages, he found an unhappy state of affairs. The colonists were still idle and unthrifty, taking no heed for the morrow, and offending the Indians in the neighbourhood by wanton acts of cruelty and injustice. Worse still, perhaps, they began to trade with those Indians who were still friendly, not with harmless beads and copper kettles, but with swords and guns.

John Smith was very wroth at this folly.

'Those swords,' he said, 'will be used to cut our own throats.'

His words, however, were not attended to. President Ratcliffe and his favourites, in spite of Smith's former care for them when they had been stricken with fever, were still his enemies, and he was actually in danger of being hanged as a 'traitor,' though he escaped, because they found they could hardly do without him.

Meanwhile Powhatan and his braves were growing intolerably insolent and proud, owing not a little to the absurd behaviour of the English colonists. Captain Newport, who had been to England and returned with fresh supplies, was commissioned by King James to crown Powhatan with all the ceremony of a Christian monarch. So Newport and a little band of the colonists proceeded to his collection of wigwams, which they called his 'Court,' spread down a crimson carpet, and produced the crown, robe, and anointing oil. Powhatan was much impressed, but also very nervous. It took some time to persuade him that the crimson gown would not bewitch him if he put it on, and he had to be held down by three men before the crown could be placed upon his head. However, the ceremony over, he was much pleased with himself, and, seeing that he was held in such deference by the English, began to give himself airs, and put up the price of his corn and provisions. Finding that in this little game he was checkmated by John Smith, who refused to be cheated, he grew sullen and treacherous, and his braves began to rob and murder. Captain Smith retaliated by burning Indian villages and punishing the prisoners who fell into his hands. By these drastic measures he succeeded in bringing the red-skins to order, and peace was secured as long as he remained in Virginia.

This was not so long as was necessary to the success of the colony. Towards the end of 1609 he was seriously wounded by an accidental explosion of gunpowder through the carelessness of one of his men. He was so crippled for a time that

he could take no active part in the affairs of the colony, and took an opportunity which offered to return to England to recruit his health. Probably he was induced to do so also by the enmity with which he was regarded by Ratcliffe and his associates. Between 1610 and 1617 he was again back on the North American coast, which he explored for a distance covered later by the colonies of Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine. To this great territory he gave the name of New England, the title being approved by Prince Charles, afterwards Charles I., who added other names such as Cape James, Stuart Bay, and Charles River, to places marked on the map which John Smith took back with him to England.

Here ends the story of Captain John Smith, as far as Virginia is concerned. He was a remarkable man—a fine type of one of our early Empire-builders. No doubt, in his own narrative of his adventures, he bragged somewhat more than was necessary about his own achievements, and no doubt mixed his facts with a good deal of romance. But there is no reason to doubt that he was the one man of real capacity and grit among these early Virginian colonists, in spite of his overbearing and domineering spirit. This is borne witness to by one of his companions, a gentleman of the noble old family of Percy, who was with him in Virginia, and put the following generous testimony on record after Smith had returned to England:

‘What shall I say, but thus we lost him that in all his proceedings made justice his first guide and prudence his second; ever hating baseness, sloth, pride, and indignity more than any dangers; that never allowed more for himself than his soldiers with him; that would send them upon no danger where he could not lead them himself; that would never see us want what he either had or could by any means get us; that would rather want than borrow, or starve than not pay; that loved action more than words, and hated falsehood and covetousness worse than death; whose adventures were our lives, and whose loss our deaths.’

It was no exaggeration that the loss of Smith meant the death of the colonists. When he had gone they suffered every kind of misfortune, owing to divided counsels, carelessness, or sheer folly. They dealt with the Indians sometimes with silly deference and sometimes with cruelty and broken faith, so that they (the white men) were hated without being feared.

Ratcliffe, the former President, who had been deposed in favour of Master George Percy, went down the Chickahominy with twenty-nine men to buy grain from the Indians. Powhatan received them with a pretence of hospitality, but as they were returning to their barge with a few bushels of grain, which was all they could extract from the natives, a band of braves who had been concealed in the woods sprang out upon them with wild whoops, and sent a flight of arrows into their midst. Only one escaped with his life, a lad named Henry Spelman, who was taken prisoner, and lived for many years with the Indians, until, when he had almost forgotten his own language, he was discovered by the later colonists of Virginia. The others were all shot down, and none returned to Jamestown to tell the tale of massacre.

After that the unfortunate colonists went through a frightful experience, which the survivors called the 'starving time.' During the winter they were reduced to such a state of famine that they had nothing to eat but roots and herbs. Out of 490 of them, 430 perished miserably. The remaining 60—gaunt, famished, and disease-stricken wretches—were rescued from death by the timely arrival of a fleet from England under the command of Lord Delaware, who brought with him 130 new settlers and plentiful supplies of food and ammunition.

The colony was saved. From that time forward Virginia began to be a prosperous settlement. Lord Delaware and his gentlemen, many of them belonging to noble English families, succeeded in pacifying the Indians, and, as years went by, there were constant arrivals of English ships bringing over hardy young men and women to build up new homes in the first plantation of England's Empire beyond the seas. The

population was increased by less desirable emigrants, large numbers of convicts being sent from time to time by the British Government. These men became the slaves of the Virginian planters, and worked side by side in the tobacco-fields with negro slaves brought over by Dutch slave-traders. The labour of these poor wretches was undoubtedly very valuable in the early days of the colony, when white labour was all too scarce for the cultivation of that tobacco which was the chief source of the colonists' prosperity, being exported to England and Europe generally in ever-increasing quantities.

Within the course of a century primitive little towns dotted the whole of the Virginian territory, and the great virgin forests were cleared over large areas to make way for cultivated plantations. The magnificent soil gave forth rich crops, timber was to be had for nothing for building purposes, and many of the settlers became wealthy to a degree which would have seemed fabulous to those who had suffered such hardships in the early days.

The colony was under the dominion of the English Crown, and Governors were sent out to represent the King in the New World. The colonists, however, had a fair share in their own government, two representatives from each plantation being elected to the House of Burgesses, which, with the Governor's council, formed a colonial Parliament, the first representative assembly in America.

Raleigh's dream had come true, though he had not lived to see its fulfilment.

CHAPTER VI

THE PILGRIM FATHERS

In August of the year 1620 two ships, called the *Speedwell* and the *Mayflower*, set sail from Southampton towards the coast of New England, which had been mapped out by Captain John Smith. The emigrants on board were of a very different

character to those who had formerly left their native country for the New World. The men who had gone out under Walter Raleigh or Humphrey Gilbert, with John Smith or Lord Delaware, were adventurers by instinct and profession—the impoverished sons of noble families and young men of gallantry and daring. Some few had been fired with the spirit of exploration, with the great ideal of founding an Empire for England beyond the seas, others with the mere commercial desire of building up fortunes more easily than was possible in their own country by the discovery of gold and precious spices and other valuable commodities which the New World was supposed to possess.

But those who sailed on the *Speedwell* and the *Mayflower* had no such ideas, and they had nothing in common with the light-hearted adventurers of the old school. They were men of an earnest, God-fearing character, sober and restrained in speech, peace-loving, and desirous of no wild adventures or sudden wealth. They were filled with but one ambition—the right to live in peace with people of their own faith, free to worship God in their own way without persecution. This the Puritans had not been able to do when the religious indifference of Elizabeth had been succeeded by the bigotry of James I. Already these emigrants on the *Speedwell* and the *Mayflower* had been exiles for conscience' sake from their own land. They had formed a little English colony at Leyden, in the Netherlands; but life in a foreign country, among people of a different race and speech, had no permanent attractions for them. They were still loyal to their own flag, in spite of persecution, and they had no wish to cut themselves adrift from their ties of nationality. Thus their thoughts became directed towards the New World, where England had established claims over vast unpopulated territories. They learned that the Plymouth Company, who had obtained these rights, were anxious to procure emigrants to develop the resources of these Western shores, and the Puritan leaders, inspired by the example of old Biblical heroes like Moses and Joshua, who led the chosen people from a land of

little faith to a new country beyond the tyranny of an unjust King, resolved to take their wives and children to that New England of liberty and hope. Here they would be able, by God's help, to build up a new society governed according to their own ideas of Christian law and righteousness. Here they could found a Puritan Church free from persecution from without; and here also they could adopt the old manners and customs and way of life from which they had been deprived during the exile in Holland, retaining their nationality and language, and remaining, though free and unfettered, in allegiance with the English Crown. Accordingly, they obtained concessions from the Plymouth Company and a charter from the King, and thus, provided with full legal right to settle in the New World, they sailed towards the West.

These Puritans held no false notions of the life in store for them. They knew it was to be an existence of hardship and suffering and danger. But they were prepared to face all things with trust in God, and they believed that, with the inspiration of their faith, they could go where other men could not, and endure things before which others would flinch and fail.

The *Speedwell* and the *Mayflower* were battered about by storms, and suffered many mishaps, so that both had to put back for repairs. Finally, the *Mayflower* left Plymouth alone on September 6, 1620, and arrived at Cape Cod on November 9 of that year, which month was spent by those on board in selecting a place for landing. Finally, on December 11 the Pilgrim Fathers went on shore at a place which they called, and is still called, Plymouth, after the port whence they had sailed.

Already these pioneers of the North American colonies had drawn up, while still on board ship, a code of laws, or 'body politic' as they called it in their quaint, old-fashioned diction, for the future government of their State. By this they recognised the sovereignty of England, while claiming the full right to make their own ordinances for the conduct of the citizens,

for self-defence, and for the authority of the Church. A Governor was to be elected by the vote of every male citizen, and all male members of the Church were permitted to share in the management of public affairs. Nineteen years later, when the colony of Plymouth had increased in size and importance, a House of Representatives was established to advise the Governor, and to pass any new laws required from time to time.

To tell the story of the gradual growth and prosperity of the North American colonies in full detail would require a book many times the length of this one. It is a story of brave self-sacrifice, of quiet, steady courage and perseverance in the face of difficulties and dangers, of industrious, law-abiding citizens, who worked not only for themselves, but for the common good, and of wise, shrewd, and righteous men, who, as Governors of the various States of New England—now gradually populated by increasing numbers of Puritans, who left the old country for the greater freedom of the New World—ruled with stern justice, but also with fatherly benevolence, like the patriarchs of the early Jews.

During the course of the century that followed the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers there were founded the Puritan colonies of Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, and New Hampshire. William Penn, the famous Quaker and apostle of religious freedom, had purchased from the King the proprietorship of the vast territories of Pennsylvania, and had founded a State which, unlike the other Puritan colonies, was free to people of every religious belief, and which was always remarkable for its just laws, its uninterrupted peace, and for its continuous prosperity. Other States were colonized by agents of the English Government, such as that of New Jersey, which was granted by Charles II. to his brother, the Duke of York, who afterwards sold it to Lord Berkeley and Sir George Carteret. At a later period it was purchased by William Penn and the Quakers. New York, which had been founded by a Dutch colony, was captured in 1664, when we were at war with

Holland. This State, with the Carolinas and Georgia, were directly ruled over by the King of England through Governors, who were not elected by the people, as in the free Puritan States, but appointed by the English Crown.

Maryland was first colonized, in 1631, by a gentleman named Captain William Clayborne and a number of emigrants from Virginia, but the following year Charles II. granted a charter to Lord Baltimore, who sent out his brother, Leonard Carteret, with about 200 Roman Catholic gentlemen. There was some trouble between the first colonists and the new-comers owing to their difference of religion, but eventually an agreement was made up by which Maryland was opened to persons of every form of religious belief.

It is possible to trace the localities in England from which the little colonies of the early settlers first came by the names they gave to the towns in the country of their adoption; for in many cases, with affectionate remembrance of their old homes, they called these primitive little townships after their native places in old England. Thus scattered over the North American colonies, we come across such familiar names as Bridgewater, Weymouth, Taunton, Dorchester, Tiverton, Dartmouth, and Salisbury, showing how many West-Country Englishmen were among the pioneers of New England, and others belonging to the English East Coast, such as Ipswich, Cambridge, Lynn, Yarmouth, and Hull. The Midland Counties do not seem to have sent many emigrants to America in those early days, judging from the scarcity of Midland names. Sometimes the town received its name from the description of its locality or scenery, such as Deerfield, Springfield, Fairfield, Woodbury, Waterbury, Watertown, and so on. Here and there the Puritan settlers, familiar with the geography of the Scriptures, would find a fancied resemblance in their new homes to places in Bible history, and would call them Lebanon or Mount Zion. Others, if not going to the Bible for its geography, would call their settlements by such peaceful Christian names as Providence or Concord.

Very small, primitive, and rude were those North American townships. The houses, mostly of wood, were often widely scattered over a great clearing, divided by orchards and fields and tracts of marshy and uncultivated ground, while beyond and around them stood the giant forests, silent and almost impenetrable. In districts bordering upon Indian territories greater precautions were needed for defence, and the houses were built closer together, in irregular streets, the whole town being enclosed by a wooden stockade. Later on, when such towns as Boston, Ipswich, and Newhaven increased in size and prosperity, the houses of the leading citizens began to be built of stone; but this was exceptional, and Boston especially was long considered a marvellous 'city-like town,' and aroused the enthusiasm of travellers on account of its buildings, 'beautiful and large, some finely set forth with brick, tile, and stone.' The houses themselves were at first as simple in design as a child's doll's house, generally having a large single room on the ground-floor, warmed by a fire-place at each end, and above two upper chambers for sleeping purposes. Sometimes, for the wealthier citizens, the houses would be built on a more extensive scale, with two parlours on the ground-floor, as well as a kitchen and a hall, and above four bedchambers. The furniture was of a 'home-made' kind—roughly-carved chairs, tables, presses, and cupboards—being as useful as need be, but not betraying these Puritan farmers or their wives into any outward luxury.

In these surroundings the New England Puritans passed hard, healthy lives, toiling on their lands, rearing their cattle, sheep, and swine, trying, not unsuccessfully on the whole, to serve God in peace and righteousness, and with family life as their chief source of pleasure and recreation, and with the religious 'meeting-house' as the centre of their simple society, where all gathered together for common worship. They had the interests and excitements of political life also, for every settlement had its little local Parliament established at the

Town Hall, and every colony its Council and Governor as the authorities of law and order.

'It was an age'—to quote the great American writer Nathaniel Hawthorne, in his masterpiece 'The Scarlet Letter'—'when what we call talent had far less consideration than now, but the massive materials which produce stability and dignity and character a great deal more. The people possessed by hereditary right the quality of reverence, which in their descendants, if it survive at all, exists in smaller proportion, and with a vastly diminished force, in the selection and estimate of public men. The change may be for good or ill, and is partly, perhaps, for both. In that old day the English settler on those rude shores—having left king, nobles, and all degrees of lawful rank behind, while still the faculty and necessity of reverence were strong within him—bestowed it on the white hair and venerable brow of age, on long-tried integrity, on solid wisdom and sad-coloured experience, on endowments of that grave and weighty order which gives the idea of permanence, and comes under the general definition of respectability. These primitive statesmen, therefore—Bradstreet, Endicott, Dudley, Bellingham, and their compeers—who were elevated to power by the early choice of the people, seem to have been not often brilliant, but distinguished by a ponderous sobriety rather than activity of intellect. They had fortitude and self-reliance, and in time of difficulty or peril stood up for the welfare of the State like a line of cliffs against a tempestuous tide.'

A New England colony was, indeed, a school of life which bred good honest men, somewhat narrow and hard, but ready to face any difficulty fairly and squarely, and not flinching before danger.

CHAPTER VII

REDSKINS ON THE WAR-PATH

LIFE in New England was not without its danger in those days. It did not come occasionally, but was an ever-present anxiety to those sturdy colonists. For though they had lawful possession of the land as far as grants and charters from kings and companies might go, there were others with a natural right to dispute their claims, and with a natural hatred for the new-comers. The Red Indians who roamed the prairies and haunted the forests of North America were sometimes outward friends, but nearly always secret enemies, of the 'pale-faces.' Their friendship might be obtained by fair dealing for periods of peace, but it was an armed truce only, and any isolated act of violence, or any wanton dishonesty by some English settler, any fancied insult even, might at once send a powerful tribe upon the war-path with tomahawk and fire-brand; then God help the men, women, and children in the lonely homesteads of those scattered English settlements!

The records of those early colonies contain many tragic tales of massacre. Even in Virginia, where the English, under Captain John Smith, had established such friendly relations for a time with Powhatan, the father of Pocahontas, there were serious troubles with the Indians at times when danger was least expected. Powhatan had been succeeded by his brother Opechancanough, a chief of proud, jealous, and war-like temper, with an intense hatred for the white race who had taken possession of a great slice of his ancestor's territory. His anger was aroused to burning-point by the death of a favourite warrior called, on account of his love for personal adornment, Jack of the Feather. This young brave had beguiled an Englishman named Morgan into the Indian camp, and then had treacherously killed him. The murderer was afterwards seized by the English, and in his struggles was

mortally wounded. As he had been considered invulnerable and immortal by his own people on account of his many hair-breadth escapes, his death was a severe blow to them, and Opechancanough secretly prepared his plans for vengeance. The Virginians suspected nothing. They were lulled in a false sense of security. At the last moment a gentleman named Mr. Pace was warned by a friendly Indian, who wished to save his life; but the towns and hamlets were so scattered that he had no time to raise the alarm throughout the colony. He was able to warn the settlers in his own district, and so prevented a general extermination, but the horrid war-cries of the hideous warriors, smeared with blood-red paint, rang out round many a lonely farmstead where the father sat with his wife and family in peaceful happiness after the day's work. Three hundred and fifty men, women, and children were done to death in that sudden attack, and the scalp knife was busy that night, no mercy being shown by the bloodthirsty savages.

The Virginians roused themselves to action, and by a combined defence drove the redskins to the woods. Crafty and treacherous though they were, the Indians were really no match against the united efforts of the colonists. The Virginian Assembly commanded that 'the inhabitants of every plantation should fall upon the adjoining savages,' and it was ordered that all homes should be palisaded, and that no one was to go to church unarmed. These measures were successful, and for a long time there was peace.

Praise is due to the settlers in Virginia and those of other States for the general justice and wisdom of their dealings with the Indians. It was seldom, even, that the occasional atrocities of the native warriors incited the colonists to any wild or wanton acts of revenge. The Puritan Governors passed laws forbidding the sale of firearms or spirits to the natives, and the old records show that if this was done by any unscrupulous settler heavy fines and imprisonment were inflicted upon the transgressors. In some of the colonies it was even forbidden

to trade in any form whatever with the redskins. In Virginia, towards the end of the seventeenth century, many benevolent Acts were passed for protecting the Indians from injustice or cruelty; and these laws seem to have been firmly administered. In 1666, for instance, four prominent citizens were severely punished for disregarding them. A certain Captain Yorke was fined 10,000 pounds of tobacco for allowing the murderer of an Indian to escape. Two gentlemen named Captain Brent and Captain Hawk were fined £15,000 and disqualified for all civil or military offices on account of illegally imprisoning an Indian. Lastly, a Captain Fauntleroy was degraded, and disqualified from any official position whatever, for illegally extorting territory from the Indians.

Unfortunately, in spite of such good laws as these, a few isolated acts of private injustice upon a single Indian were sufficient to inflame the passions of a whole tribe.

In 1666 another tragedy took place, and this time the colonists were not sufficiently careful of their honour in their methods of demanding retribution. Some Indians on the Potomac River accused a planter named Matthews of having cheated them. To pay themselves back they stole some of his swine. The thieves were pursued and some of them killed. Their tribe immediately retaliated by attacking Matthews' plantation and scalping four of the settlers. So the tragedy went on until, from a mere misunderstanding, it grew into a bloody war. A troop of English planters set out to revenge the death of their friends. But they lost the track of the real aggressors, and killed fourteen men of a friendly tribe in Maryland before they discovered their mistake. This was the signal for war among the Indians along the whole line of the Potomac. The English colonists of Maryland and Virginia, in danger of their lives, raised a force of 2,000 men and besieged the principal Indian fort. After a defence of six weeks six chiefs came out under a sign of truce to settle terms with the colonists. By the laws of warfare, among all civilized and uncivilized races alike, they should have been

sacred from any violence. But the colonists, exasperated by the long resistance, forgot their honour and killed the men who had put themselves into their hands. It is a black blot in the story of Virginia. 'They should have gone away in safety had they killed my own father,' said Governor Berkeley when he heard of it.

By an artful stratagem the Indians got away from the fort without the knowledge of their enemies, and, falling upon the now unguarded plantations of the district, took their revenge by slaying sixty settlers—ten for every one of their murdered chiefs.

Massacre and outrage followed. Many a lonely farmer, cut off from all help, defended his log-house, sheltering his wife and children against bands of savage Indians until they burnt it with their fire-brands and killed every living being. Three hundred settlers were slain in this way, many of them being tortured with all the horrible ingenuity of Indian cruelty.

Unfortunately, Berkeley, the Governor of Virginia, did not show a strong hand, and his measures for defence were weak and unavailing. One adventurer named Nathaniel Bacon took the law into his own hands, and, raising a force of young colonists, vowed vengeance on the redskins. He seems to have been a bold, unscrupulous, and violent man, and was determined to use Indian methods when fighting Indians. He attacked a native village, and, having set fire to it, killed every soul alive, including the women and children, to the number of 150.

Governor Berkeley considered this unauthorized warfare as an outrage on the Government of Virginia. He proclaimed Nathaniel Bacon as a rebel, and sent a force to capture him. The colony became divided against itself, and a small civil war took place between the Government party and the adherents of Bacon. Matters actually went so far that the rebels laid siege to Jamestown and set fire to it, protecting themselves against the bullets of the Governor's soldiers by placing Lady Berkeley and other women whom they had captured in the

forefront of their force. Berkeley, naturally anxious to avoid killing his wife and helpless women, left Jamestown to its fate. The unhappy business was finally ended by the death of Bacon, which was followed by the immediate break-up of his party and peace with the Indians.

What happened thus in Virginia is an example of the tragedies of Indian warfare in the Puritan colonies. In spite of all precautions and resolute justice in all dealings with the native tribes, it was inevitable that there should be a struggle to the death between the two races. In Plymouth, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine the redskins were gradually being ousted from their territories and hemmed in to restricted areas by the encroachments of the English settlers. At first they were ready enough to barter their land for gaudy toys or old flintlocks, but afterwards they began to realize that the future and very existence of their race were threatened by the increasing power and ever-advancing settlements of the pale-faces. Their savage pride was wounded, their jealousy was inflamed, and their smouldering hatred was ready to break out into the fire of passion and murderous lust whenever an opportunity occurred for wreaking their vengeance.

To do them credit, the Indians waited generally for some excuse of injustice or cruelty on the part of their enemies before taking to the war-path, and such excuses were not wanting in these colonies, where the inhabitants were so scattered, and in these isolated districts so free to act without let or hindrance save from their own conscience.

One of the most thrilling chapters of Indian warfare is that known by the name of 'King Philip's War.' Philip, or Metacom, as he was called by his own people, was the chief of the Pokanoket tribe, which had for a long time maintained a friendly alliance with the Puritans of Massachusetts and Maine. By repeated purchases of territory, his people had been driven into two necks of land along the coast, and Philip's soul was sad and angry at the loss of his father's

prairies. He entered into secret negotiations with other tribes for a general rising against the white men. Rumours of this danger came to the ears of the people of Plymouth and Massachusetts, and messages were sent to the Indian chief warning him to keep the peace.

Then a fatal episode brought about the crisis. A converted Indian named Sansamon was found murdered and mutilated. There was no direct evidence as to who had done the evil deed, but three of Philip's braves were captured and hanged on the accusation of another native.

Philip, the chief of the Pokanokets, regarded this as an outrage upon his people. It was the signal for war.

On Sunday morning, June 20, 1675, the people of a little seaport named Swansey, on the coast of Plymouth, were terrified by a sudden onslaught of Indians in full war-paint. What exactly happened history does not record, but it seems that the inhabitants were unable to offer any resistance. Their mutilated corpses, the dead bodies of their cattle, and their ruined houses were afterwards discovered by messengers from Massachusetts, who had come too late to warn them of their peril.

The Narragansett tribe joined hands with the Pokanokets; then the Nipmucs and the Pequods went upon the war-path. Throughout the length and breadth of Connecticut and Massachusetts the English settlements were in extreme danger. The people of these two colonies, with those of Plymouth and Rhode Island, raised various forces for the common defence. One of these bands of planters advanced against a Pequot fort surrounded by swamps, which in summer would have been impassable, but were now frozen over. Six of the English captains were shot down one by one by the Indian marksmen. For three hours there was fierce fighting; then the palisades were scaled by a flanking party, while the larger body of the planters forced their way through the main entrance. In the darkness of the December afternoon it was difficult to tell friend from foe, but soon a lurid glare illumined the Indian stronghold when Mason, the English leader, gave the cruel

order for the Pequod wigwams to be fired. Women and children perished in the flames, and the Pequod fighting-men were put to the sword. Mercy that day was forgotten.

In other parts of the land the New England soil was watered with blood. At Deerfield, in Connecticut, the harvest was being gathered in, guarded by ninety well-armed men. But the Indians had prepared an ambush, and as the grain-laden waggons were returning to the homesteads the sudden yells of the warriors rang over the golden fields, and the tomahawks glistened in the sun. Less than ten of the English settlers remained alive to tell the tale of massacre, and the name of Bloody Brook commemorates the spot where the farmers fell.

At Springfield the Indians suddenly appeared and burnt forty houses, the lives of the inhabitants being saved by the providential arrival of an armed force from a neighbouring town.

Many heroic episodes took place, when planters in lonely regions defended their homes for weeks against immense odds of crafty savages. Many of the isolated hamlets were abandoned altogether, and the people sought shelter in the more populous and protected towns. In Connecticut every male person of full age was called out for guard duty, with the exception of ministers, schoolmasters, and millers, whose services were considered indispensable for the needs of religion, learning, and life.

A day of public humiliation was ordained to ask pardon from the Almighty for the sins which had brought down the tomahawk and the scalping-knife upon the heads of the New England Puritans. According to the belief of the pious ministers, Divine wrath had been incurred by such heinous crimes as the wearing of long hair, inattention at church, 'rudeness in worship,' extravagance in dress, and neglect in catechizing the young.

But while God's peace was prayed for big battalions were also raised, no less than 1,100 men being enrolled by the various colonies to proceed against the Indians.

The redskins, however, had their own methods of warfare. They knew well enough they were no match for the English in the open, but in the woods they had learnt the art of concealing themselves with the cunning of hunted animals. In their mocassins they could walk through the thick undergrowth without cracking a twig. They could hide all traces of their war-trail, so that no English force could follow them. Such foes were difficult to fight, for they were difficult to find. Nevertheless, by gradually closing them in by a tightening circle of armed forces, and by cutting off their food-supplies, the English succeeded eventually in wearing them down. Large numbers of Indians were killed, and still greater numbers captured; several of the tribes who had taken to the war-path surrendered, and at last Philip, the chief of the Pokanokets, after being hunted through forests and swamps like a wild beast, was shot down by an Indian scout in the pay of the English.

Other wars of this character were waged from time to time in the New England States. It is the most tragic and melancholy part of colonial history. One must feel a profound pity for those wild men who had been the original inhabitants and owners of the vast prairies of North America, and were gradually exterminated by the more civilized race of strangers who had taken possession of their land.

The Red Indian might not be 'the noble savage' as he has sometimes been represented by writers of romance, but until the white man degraded him by enclosing him within narrow boundaries, by seizing his 'happy hunting-grounds,' and by making him idle, and therefore vicious, he had many fine qualities—of courage, of generosity, of dignity, of patience, endurance, and physical grandeur, which raised him above the level of the mere savage.

But, sad though it may be, whenever two races come into rivalry the weaker one goes to the wall, and it was inevitable that the red-skin should eventually succumb when the white man had need of his lands.

CHAPTER VIII

PURITANS AND QUAKERS

MEANWHILE, in spite of Indian raids and massacres, the colonies were speedily building up a solid prosperity. New tracts of forest lands were continually being cleared by the woodman's axe. Herds of fat cattle grazed on the prairies where the wild buffalo had roamed; great fields of golden corn ripened round the homesteads, and Boston, Plymouth, and other New England towns grew in size and importance.

These towns still kept their Puritan character, and the lives of the citizens were strictly ordered by a religious and moral code which gave them no liberty of conscience or conduct, but required every man, woman, and child to be a good church-goer, a sober and respectable member of society, and an example of pious, God-fearing zeal.

The influence of this Puritan way of life showed itself in a fine simplicity and sobriety of character, and the virtues of home-life and good citizenship were never seen to better advantage than in the New England States. Yet, nowadays, when liberty of thought, of speech, and of conduct is the most cherished right of the English-speaking people, the absolute authority of the Puritan churches seems to us rather tyrannical, and sometimes cruel, narrow, and bigoted.

Many of the fashions customary in England of those Stuart days were forbidden by the Puritan leaders of the North American colonies under severe penalties. Any extravagance in dress was vigorously condemned. In Massachusetts an Act was passed forbidding such articles of attire as gold or silver girdles, hat-bands, belts, ruffs or beaver hats, and later on, only those possessing an income of £200 a year or more were allowed to wear gold lace or great boots. The wearing of long hair, masquerading in vizors, dancing, card-playing, and all forms of gambling were strictly forbidden. It was

even considered a sin to drink healths, and dancing, though not prohibited by law, was looked upon with stern disapproval.

The old records of New England contain frequent notices of people being fined, whipped, or put in the stocks for these offences. Some of the punishments seem to us somewhat childish. It was often a custom to make an offender an object of public contempt by causing the man or woman to wear a label or symbol of the fault committed. Thus a convicted drunkard was obliged to go about with a great red 'D' on him. One who behaves contemptuously towards the Word preached, or the minister thereof, or interrupts the minister in his preaching, or charges him falsely with error, or makes God's ways contemptible and ridiculous, is to be labelled a 'Wanton Gospeller.' An Englishwoman guilty of marrying an Indian has to wear the figure of a savage cut out in red cloth and fastened to her sleeve.

Childish though such punishments may seem nowadays, they must have been very terrible in a simple society where every man and woman was well known to all the citizens of the little town in which the guilty person chanced to live.

In the work by Nathaniel Hawthorne, which has already been quoted in this book, there is an impressive picture of a scene in the market-place of Boston, when the citizens assembled to see such a punishment as this wearing of 'The Scarlet Letter,' and the passage is worth reading, apart from its context, as a description of life in one of the early New England towns and the stern character of the Puritan people.

'Amongst any other population,' he writes, 'or at a later period in the history of New England, the grim rigidity that petrified the bearded physiognomies of these good people would have augured some awful business in hand. It could have betokened nothing short of the anticipated execution of some noted culprit, on whom the sentence of a legal tribunal had but confirmed the verdict of public sentiment. But, in that early

severity of the Puritan character, an inference of this kind could not so indubitably be drawn. It might be that a sluggish bond-servant, or an undutiful child, whom his parents had given over to the civil authority, was to be corrected at the whipping-post. It might be that an Antinomian, a Quaker, or other heterodox religionist, was to be scourged out of the town, or an idle and vagrant Indian, whom the white man's fire-water had made riotous about the streets, was to be driven with stripes into the shadow of the forest. It might be, too, that a witch, like old Mistress Hibbins, the bitter-tempered widow of the magistrate, was to die upon the gallows. In either case, there was very much the same solemnity of demeanour on the part of the spectators as befitted a people amongst whom religion and law were almost identical, and in whose character both were so thoroughly interfused that the mildest and the severest acts of public discipline were alike made venerable and awful. Meagre, indeed, and cold was the sympathy that a transgressor might look for from such bystanders at the scaffold. On the other hand, a penalty which, in our days, would infer a degree of mocking infamy and ridicule, might then be invested with almost as stern a dignity as the punishment of death itself.'

The great blot upon New England Puritanism was this intolerance for people of a different faith. Although they had voluntarily exiled themselves from their native land for the sake of liberty of conscience, and to be free to worship God in their own way, the Puritan colonists were not willing to give the same liberty to others. Their own persecution had not taught them charity, but they were for a time almost as cruel and relentless in their persecution of people whose religious belief was at all different from their own as those who had kindled the Smithfield fires for Protestants and Catholics.

After the Civil War in England between King and Parliament a new religious sect had sprung up, called Quakers. These people, who seem to us now very harmless and law-abiding, were looked upon at the time when George Fox, the

founder of their society, raised his voice against all outward forms and ceremonies, as dangerous and blaspheming heretics.

In May, 1656, two women belonging to this new form of faith, named Ann Austin and Mary Fisher, came to Boston from England as Quaker missionaries. Their coming caused profound excitement among the Puritans of Massachusetts. In the absence of Endicott, the Governor, afterwards renowned for his persecution of the Quakers, his deputy seized the two ladies, confiscated their books, and called a Council to deal with this advance-guard of heresy. After much anxious deliberation an order was given for the books to be burnt and the women to be closely imprisoned until they could be sent back to England or conveyed elsewhere. For fear of their communicating any heretical doctrines to the people of Boston, no one was allowed access to them, and the windows of their prison were boarded up. Here in the darkness they were kept for five weeks, when they were put on board a vessel bound for Barbadoes. It was lucky for them they escaped with no further sufferings, for when Governor Endicott returned he lamented that they had been sent off without a flogging.

No sooner had Ann Austin and Mary Fisher departed than eight other Quakers, of whom four were women, came to take their place. Again the Boston magistrates exercised their authority and clapped the strangers into prison.

The Governor and Council of Massachusetts then proceeded to pass a series of Acts for the punishment and prohibition of all Quakers and of any persons who should listen to them. It was resolved that any shipmaster who should knowingly bring in any Quakers should be fined £100, and required to carry them away on pain of imprisonment, and that, before being so removed, the Quakers themselves should be imprisoned with hard labour and flogged. The other colonies followed this example, and enacted severe penalties against the 'heretics.' In Plymouth any person might seize a Quaker without a warrant, and take possession of his house.

In spite of penalties and punishments, there was a persistent Quaker invasion of New England, and still harsher measures were passed by the Massachusetts Council to check this 'wave of heresy.' The laws against harbouring or bringing in any of these people were made more stringent, and any banished Quaker bold enough to return was to have his ears chopped off, and, if again returning, his tongue bored through with a hot iron.

Even this was not sufficient to deter the courageous disciples of George Fox, and, despite all difficulties and dangers, they arrived in greater numbers, and succeeded in making converts. Then, among the more fanatical Puritans of Massachusetts there came a clamour for blood. The clipping of ears, the boring of tongues, seemed to them mere trifling when such bold heretics were concerned. So, not without a noble opposition of saner and kinder spirits, a law was enacted by which the sentence of death itself should be passed upon any stubborn Quakers of either sex.

The first to suffer under this cruel tyranny of a fanatical law were William Robinson, Marmaduke Stevenson, and Mary Dyer. They deliberately came to Boston, knowing they were delivering themselves to death. But they were eager to gain the martyr's crown, and it was not refused them. Yet it was not with an easy conscience that their judges passed the dread sentence upon them.

Endicott, the Governor, who presided over the trial, is said to have 'spoken faintly, as a man whose life was departing from him,' and he urged the Quakers to keep away, as he desired not their deaths.

It was on October 27 that the first execution of Quakers took place at Boston. It was carried out with a public feeling of shame and guilt, and the procession to the gallows skulked through the back-streets. The two men, Robinson and Stevenson, took their place upon the scaffold with quiet dignity and peaceful faces. Death had no fears for them. At the last moment Mary Dyer was reprieved, at the prayer of her own

son, by whom she was rapidly conveyed out of Boston. But she was not to be denied her martyrdom, and, returning again in the following May, she suffered the extreme penalty, desiring, she said, to bear witness against an unjust law. The next Quaker to suffer in Boston was one William Leddra, who returned after banishment. For four months he was kept in prison, and was offered the chance of escape if he promised never to return again. It was evident the magistrates flinched before carrying out the death sentence. But Leddra refused, and he, too, went joyfully to the gallows.

It was evident that martyrdom was a prize rather than a penalty to the Quakers, and the Puritan leaders began to realize that in this sect, as in others, 'the blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church.' Humanitarian counsels also began to prevail, and King Charles II. of England expressed his desire for more toleration towards the Quakers. So from one cause and another the laws were made less and less severe, as formerly they had been increased in strictness. Flogging at the cart-tail—not a strong contrast in its tenderness!—was substituted for the death penalty, and by degrees the battle of toleration was fought and won.

CHAPTER IX

THE WITCH-FINDERS

EVEN a short sketch of life in Puritan New England would not be complete without some mention of another brief but terrible spell of fanaticism which came like a dark cloud over those colonies. This took the form of witch trials and witch burnings, when poor, wretched old creatures whose misfortune it was to have ugly faces and crooked tempers, and sometimes, no doubt, mad or muddled wits, were accused of being possessed by the Devil, and under cruel cross-examination were made to confess sins they had never committed and acts they

had no power to perform. It is a sad reflection on the superstition and cruelty of human nature that men so shrewd, so pious, and in many ways so wise as the Puritan Governors, magistrates, and Ministers of the North American colonies, should have taken part in these ghastly trials in which neither justice nor truth had any part.

During that period of terror no man or woman was safe, for the malevolence of a private enemy might lead to an accusation of witchcraft, when the most innocent acts could be construed into evidence of traffic with the Arch-fiend, and when the brow-beating of superstitious magistrates could twist the answers of ignorant and frightened people into an admission of guilt.

The epidemic of the witchcraft craze was most virulent at Salem, in Massachusetts. It was started by the peculiar case of Elizabeth Knapp, who was observed, it is said, 'to carry herself in a strange and unwonted manner.' She was accustomed to shriek in horror or with laughter for no apparent reason, and to throw herself violently upon the ground. She was subject to delusions, declaring that one of her fellow-citizens, a man of known goodness of character, had come down the chimney and struck her with a stick. No one believed in this story, as far as the man himself was concerned, but many shook their heads and talked about the devil. Of course the woman was merely mad, but the Puritans thought it was a case of demoniacal possession. 'Divers, when they had opportunity, pressed her to declare what might be the true and real occasion of these amazing fits.' Tormented by the questions put to her by these solemn, stupid people, it is no wonder that the poor creature became madder than before, and at last she horrified as well as gratified her inquisitors (who felt a satisfaction in having their dark suspicions confirmed) by all sorts of tales about midnight rides on a black dog with eyes in its back, and a dreadful compact with the Evil One.

This case was described in full detail by a Massachusetts

minister named Samuel Willard, a credulous, narrow-minded person, who rejoiced in the glory of having tracked Satan to his hiding-place in the body of poor Elizabeth Knapp. The publication of his narrative caused a tremendous sensation. Everybody began to look out for other manifestations of the Evil Spirit, and, as may be imagined, were not long in finding them. Some naughty children in Salem had a quarrel with an old Irish washerwoman, and to spite her said she had bewitched them. The people who heard them did not 'smack them all soundly and send them to bed'—which would have been the proper punishment—but inquired for further details, and seized the old woman on a charge of witchcraft. Pious, narrow-minded busy-bodies surrounded this wretched old creature, as they had gathered about Elizabeth Knapp, and after a solemn trial she was condemned and hanged. Again an account of the case was published, this time by a learned and renowned citizen of Massachusetts named Cotton Mather, who brought together a mass of arguments to prove the existence of witchcraft and possession. This work bore most deadly fruit. It so stirred the imagination of the people that in a short time there was a big crop of reputed witches, and it became a fashionable pilgrimage among the planters and their wives in other parts of the colonies to go to Salem to see Satan at work—an unhealthy and morbid curiosity to see some visible manifestations of the supernatural, even when it originated from the Father of Evil.

When Governor Phipps came to Salem to inquire into these extraordinary occurrences, he found no less than a hundred persons in gaol accused of witchcraft. The Governor immediately appointed a special court, consisting of seven judges, to try these cases. These seven men—terrorized, no doubt, by the superstition of the time—seemed to have lost all sense of the value of evidence. In one case, when a poor old woman named Nurse had actually been acquitted by the jury, they refused to accept the verdict, and she was sentenced and hanged forthwith.

In the course of a few weeks twenty persons, in spite of their agonized denials and appeals for mercy, were put to death. Others thought their only chance of escape was to confess the sins with which they were charged, with the result that even the saner citizens, who had been inclined to disbelieve in the witchcraft, were won over to the side of superstition. Fortunately, in one way, the evil was so great that its very gravity was the cause of its speedy cure. There could be no public safety or security so long as the denunciations and executions lasted, and when a courageous young merchant named Thomas Brattle wrote a work pointing out the weakness and folly of the evidence in these trials, public opinion was quickly restored to sanity and the epidemic of superstition abated, not, however, before many poor creatures had lost their lives. It is one of the most tragic stories in the history of New England, and must always be remembered with horror and shame. It must not be forgotten, however, that in England itself we passed through a similar period of cruel superstition. During the Commonwealth hundreds of unhappy women were tortured by the notorious witch-finder, Matthew Hopkins; and so hard does superstition die, that as late as the year 1712 a woman was brought to trial and convicted of witchcraft at Hereford.

CHAPTER X

THE CROWN AND THE COLONIES

ALTHOUGH the persecution of Quakers and the witch-finding trials are thrilling episodes in the history of New England, they are not really so important as other events less picturesque, but hardly less tragic, which were taking place in the colonies.

The right of self-government and freedom from interference in the making of laws and the levying of their own taxes were the most cherished privileges of the New Englanders.

During the early years of the Puritan colonies they had maintained a perfect loyalty to the Government in England and yet had enjoyed complete constitutional liberty, with the consent of Oliver Cromwell and the Commonwealth in the mother-country. But after the Restoration, when Charles II. and his vicious courtiers brought back the selfish tyranny of the Stuarts, a determined attack was made against the liberties of the New England colonists in the endeavour to bring them under a closer subjection to the Crown. Political agents were sent out by the English Government to report upon the condition of the colonies and to raise taxes for the King's revenue. These men, creatures of a corrupt Court, with no knowledge of or sympathy for the Puritan traditions of New England, were received with bitter and sullen hostility. One of them especially, named Randolph, who was appointed as Collector and Surveyor of Customs in New England, earned the undying hatred of the colonists for his contempt and disregard of their political liberties. The reports he sent home to his royal master were the cause of much dangerous friction in the relationship of the colonies to the Crown, as well as injurious to the trade and commercial prosperity of North America.

His chief duties were to enforce the strict fulfilment of an Act of Navigation, which ordered that no European goods might be taken into the colonies unless they had first been landed in England, thus giving a monopoly of colonial trade to English shipping and checking foreign commerce. Further, a number of heavy duties were imposed on the colonial people for the benefit of the English revenue. There is no doubt that every attempt was made by the people of New England to evade these vexatious conditions of trade, and Randolph reported this neglect of the Crown authority in the strongest terms.

After a continual passing to and fro of English agents sent out to report, and colonial representatives summoned to give evidence at Whitehall, the evasion of the Navigation Act was

made an excuse for cancelling the Royal Charter formerly given to Massachusetts and its dependent states, whereby they had been privileged to elect their own Governors and to pass their own laws in the local assemblies. At one blow the liberties of the Massachusetts colonists were struck from their hands. The old Puritan Governor, a true father of his people, knowing their character, inspired with their traditions, controlled by popular opinion, was superseded by Governor Andros, sent out by the King, acting with a Council most of whose members were nominated by the King, with full authority to levy taxes, and to make laws. In the words of Mr. J. A. Doyle, the historian of 'The English in America,' 'A commonwealth whose citizens had been trained up in the full rights of self-government and the full enjoyment of debate, where every town had its little parliament, and where a legislature chosen by the people met and acted under the broad daylight of public opinion, was evidently to be ruled by a council of strangers, against whom there was no veto and no appeal.'

It was a tyranny not to be endured patiently by a free people, and it sowed the seeds of a revolutionary spirit among the Puritans of New England, boding danger to the new colonial Empire which by hardship and in peril and through long years of industry they had built up for England. Under Governor Andros they bided their time sullenly to regain their ancient privileges; and that time soon arrived when the second revolution broke out in England, and James II. fled before the coming of William of Orange.

At first but vague rumours reached Boston of these great events in England, but they were sufficient to excite the citizens into a state of dangerous activity. Governor Andros was not ignorant of the perils threatening his authority. There was, he wrote at this time, 'a general buzzing among the people, great with expectation of their old charter.'

Then a young man named James Winslow arrived at Boston with news of King James II.'s flight, of the landing of William, Prince of Orange, and of the proclamation issued by the latter

to the English people. Governor Andros at once arrested this dangerous newsmonger, and clapped him into gaol as a rebel ; but this was not before he was able to circulate copies of the proclamation, which spread like wild-fire throughout Massachusetts.

Then one morning, in this eventful year of 1689, a large force of countrymen advanced from Charlestown to Boston, and another band appeared at the gates of the city. The popular movement had evidently been carefully and secretly prepared. Those citizens who were unaware of these approaching events were startled from their beds by the shouts of lads and the stampede of many feet down the ordinarily quiet streets of Boston. Like the 'prentice lads of old London, who at any time of tumult rushed from their shops with a cry of ' Clubs ! clubs ! ' the Boston boys were the first to lead the attack against the castle where the unpopular officials—Governor Andros, Randolph, and other enemies of the old liberties—had taken refuge.

Out in Boston Bay an English frigate was lying, and at the news of the rebellion—for such it was—the lieutenant in command opened his ports and prepared to uphold the authority of King James as long as he had powder for his guns. But the captain of the *Ross*, as she was called, happened to be a guest of the Governor at the castle, and, looking out at the great concourse of citizens who had surrounded the little fortress, he was quick to see that his own life would pay the forfeit for any shot sent from his ship across Boston Harbour. So, not wishing an early death for the sake of serving a King who had already deserted his throne, he sent a message to his more valiant lieutenant to surrender without firing a gun.

Governor Andros came to the same opinion with regard to himself, though, hated as he was, even surrender might not mean escaping with his life. To offer resistance, however, against the united mass of citizens would have been both futile and dangerous to his neck ; so the castle as well as the ship, the only strongholds of Stuart rule in Boston, passed into the

hands of the insurgents without a single drop of blood being shed on either side.

It was a great day in the history of Boston. The English Governor being deposed, the citizens brought forth the old Governor, Bradstreet by name, who had formerly ruled over them in the days of their liberty, and upon whose white and venerable locks had descended the glory of those old fathers of the people, Winthrop, and Dudley, and Bellingham, who had governed Massachusetts in its early days with wisdom, and justice, and piety, and had handed down the Puritan traditions of freedom under the rule of God's laws to the people of New England.

Very picturesque and moving must have been the sight of the old man, acclaimed by the shouts and tears of the soldiers and citizens. He was led to the Town Hall, when upon the balcony was read a proclamation, upholding the ancient liberties of Massachusetts, and deposing the officials who had destroyed them. In a brief time an elected Assembly, on the old lines, was again set up, and in due course Massachusetts declared its allegiance to William and Mary, and the new English Government.

Somewhat similar events happened in the other colonies where the Revolution was also accomplished without bloodshed.

CHAPTER XI

THE STORY OF ACADIA

ONE other chapter in New England history must be briefly recorded. Until this time the English in North America had had to guard themselves from only one enemy—but that a foe by no means to be despised—the wild men of the woods and prairies. In spite of sudden raids and dreadful massacres, they had in the long-run been able to keep the redskins in check, helped in a large measure by the jealousies and hatreds

existing between the various tribes, which prevented their uniting against the English settlers. But now a more dangerous enemy threatened them.

While our own people had been colonizing New England and the Southern States of North America, the French nation had built up a colonial Empire in Canada. They had built cities even more substantial perhaps than those in the Puritan colonies; their fisheries, agriculture, and fur trade were very prosperous; and, with a wonderful genius for impressing the imagination and securing the friendship of savage people, they had obtained the warm and sincere allegiance of some of the most powerful Indian tribes on the north-west borders of America.

So far this French Empire in Canada had not troubled the people of New England. But when war broke out between France and the mother-country there was an immediate and grave danger that the hereditary enemies of our nation might attempt to strike us a blow in the back by an invasion of our colonial Empire in the West.

These fears, but dimly felt by the leaders of New England, were quickly realized. The Governor of French Canada was a man named Frontenac, a brilliant soldier, dashing, daring, and beloved by those under his authority, a loyal and devoted son of France, yet unscrupulous and cruel towards his enemies. Seeing the opportunity of serving his King by striking at the English through their colonies, he resolved to carry war across the borders of Canada into the peaceful and unguarded settlements of Hampshire and Maine.

Before the Governors of New England had hardly recognised the peril, Frontenac had sent three separate forces into English territory, and had struck blow after blow, most cruel, merciless, and bloodthirsty, upon the small townships of the North-West. These raiders were partly French, but included among their numbers strong forces of Indian braves belonging to tribes in alliance with the French-Canadians. All the horrors of Indian warfare were therefore let loose upon the

almost helpless colonists over the Canadian borders. No quarter was given; the little wooden houses of the primitive townships were burnt to the ground; men, women, and children were murdered in cold blood, and their scalps were hung as trophies at the belts of ferocious Indians.

At the little town of Falmouth, in Maine, an heroic defence was made by the garrison of seventy men. For five days they held out against vast odds, and then only when nearly every house was in ashes and every man who still remained alive was sorely wounded, they hung out a flag of truce. The French Commander, Fortneuf, agreed to spare the survivors of the garrison, and to escort them, with the inhabitants, to the nearest English settlement. But, to the everlasting disgrace of this French officer and the men under his command, the agreement was wantonly broken, and the Indian warriors were let loose upon the people of Falmouth, the helpless women and children, as well as the wounded prisoners, being butchered without mercy and with ghastly cruelty.

The defence of New England against this barbarous invasion of French-Canadians, half-breeds, and redskins fell into the hands of a man named William Phipps. The son of a poor settler at Pemaquid, in Massachusetts, he had begun life in the humble position of ship's carpenter. Saving a little money, he took to building vessels of his own, and afterwards to trading as a merchant-captain of Boston. On one of his voyages he heard of a sunken Spanish treasure-ship. His first attempts to find it were unsuccessful, but afterwards, when he had become a Captain in the Royal Navy of England, he discovered the whereabouts of the wreck, and, with the help of the Duke of Albemarle, who provided funds, raised the vessel, and received £16,000 out of the £300,000 which were found on the prize, as well as the honour of knighthood.

This fortune, a very large one in those days, raised him to a high position among the colonists, and his daring character, his renown for courage and command caused him to be

chosen as the leader of the New England forces raised for defence against the Canadian foe.

It was decided to revenge the outrages of the invaders by an attack on the French colony of Acadia, or as it is now called, Nova Scotia, which was isolated from the other French settlements of Canada, and could be easily approached by sea. This little colony had a population of about 7,000 people, simple French farmers and fisherfolk, who led lives of happy and peaceful industry, devoted to the pious old Catholic priests who taught, baptized, married, and buried their good flocks, and were true fathers of the people. In 'Evangeline' the American poet, Longfellow, has told the tragic story of Acadia, and described the pastoral surroundings, the quiet lives, and quaint old customs of these French colonists.

'Strongly built were the houses, with frames of oak and of chestnut,
Such as the peasants of Normandy built in the reign of the Henries.
Thatched were the roofs, with dormer windows ; and gables projecting
Over the basement below, protected and shaded the doorway.
There in the tranquil evenings of summer, when brightly the sunset
Lighted the village street, and gilded the vanes on the chimneys,
Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps, and in kirtles
Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs spinning the golden
Flax for the gossiping looms, whose noisy shuttles within doors
Mingled their sound with the whirl of the wheels and the songs of the
maidens.

Solemnly down the street came the parish priest, and the children
Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended to bless them.
Reverend walked he among them ; and up rose matrons and maidens,
Hailing his slow approach with words of affectionate welcome.
Then came the labourers home from the field, and serenely the sun sank
Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed. Anon from the belfry
Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the roofs of the village
Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense ascending,
Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace and contentment.
Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian farmers,—
Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike were they free from
Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the vice of republics.
Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to their windows ;
But their dwellings were open as day and the hearts of their owners ;
There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived in abundance.'

To Port Royal, the chief town of this idyllic little State, came Sir William Phipps with 700 men in eight ships. The French garrison consisted of only sixty men, and the fishers and farmers, without warning of the attack, were both unprepared and unarmed. De Meneuil, the French officer in command of the tiny garrison, saw that resistance was useless, and wisely refusing to spill needless blood, obeyed the command of the English fleet to surrender, on condition that the homes and property of the Acadians should be respected, and that the soldiers should be conveyed to a French port. These conditions were accepted by Sir William Phipps, and to the grief of the simple patriotic colonists, devoted to their native land of France, Acadia passed into the hands of the English.

It was a frightful blow to the French-Canadians, and for forty years they never relaxed in their efforts to regain the colony. The Acadians themselves refused to take the oath of allegiance to the English, and cast anxious and imploring eyes to the neighbouring settlements of their own countrymen on Cape Breton Island, with whom they intrigued to cast off the hated yoke of their foreign masters. This yoke was certainly an easy one. Every effort was made to win over the sympathies and loyalty of the French colonists. No taxes were demanded from them, their religion was respected, and their property defended. But patriotism is an abiding faith with the French, and in the hearts of these simple peasants it was kept alive by their priests, who feared the heresy of the English, and by political missionaries from the Canadian capital.

On Cape Breton the French built the stronghold of Louisbourg, as a permanent threat against the English occupation of Acadia. Its fortifications were designed by the famous engineer, Vauban, the greatest master of defensive war, and it was boasted that even a garrison of women could hold it as an impregnable fortress, against any English army. With 1,300 men, therefore, standing at arms within its walls, its

population of 5,000 felt themselves strong to defy the most powerful force that could be brought against them.

But their boast was destined to be falsified. The English Government and the colonists of New England, knowing that Acadia could not be held so long as Louisbourg stood frowning with French batteries across the narrow strip of water, decided to make a sudden attack upon its garrison.

In the early morning of April 30, in the year 1745, the people of the fortress city lay in deepest slumber, save for the sentries who paced its walls. An hour or two before the dawn the streets had been filled with officers in glittering uniforms and ladies and gentlemen in silken dresses and embroidered coats, returning gaily with laughter and merry gossip, from a ball at the governor's house. Then all was silent as young officers fell asleep to dream of sparkling eyes, while the light of those same eyes was shaded for a few short hours by drooping lids in tired slumber.

Suddenly into the midst of the silence brooding over the city there shattered out the sharp reports of musket-shots, and the hoarse shouts of soldiers. Some sentries pacing the walls above the batteries, had caught sight of four British battleships and a fleet of smaller ships, sailing with white wings into Gabarus Bay, five miles distant from the ramparts of Louisbourg. The alarm having been raised by the startled soldiers, in a few minutes the Church bells pealed out in a discordant clamour, bugles sounded, and officers who had got to bed so short a time before tumbled out, and rushed into the streets half dressed, with naked swords. Governor Duchambon himself, with 150 men, sped down to the landing-stage, and the garrison was mustered as speedily as the alarm and consequent disorder would allow.

The fleet which had caused all this commotion was under the command of Commodore Warren, of the British Navy, and carried on board a gallant little army of New Englanders, under William Peperell, of Massachusetts. This sudden enterprise, the preparations for which had been kept a dead

secret from the French, was due to the daring and energy of Shirley, the Massachusetts Governor, with the permission and cooperation of the English Government.

The attack was so unexpected that in spite of the enormous strength of the fortifications, the English troops were landed in a good position for the assault of the town, without loss, and the guns of the fleet which had got within range of the walls and batteries cannonaded them with crushing effect. Luck was on the side of the besiegers. Commodore Warren had the good fortune to capture the *Vigilant*, a French ship, bringing in supplies urgently wanted for victualling the garrison.

The New England Volunteers, handy with spade and shovel, threw up earthworks nearer and nearer to the city walls as each night passed, and mounted heavy guns, which sent a ceaseless storm of shot and shell into the city. The French garrison made a brave defence, but with walls crumbling around them, with many of their batteries silenced, and with a dangerous shortage of provisions, their fate was sealed, and recognising the inevitable, the white flag was run up, and Louisbourg, 'the impregnable, surrendered to William Pepperell and his sturdy New Englanders.

Upon the evening of the capitulation, the English victors gave a banquet to the French officers, and clinked glasses together as brave enemies who admired each other's courage. The non-combatants, five thousand men, women, and children, were sent to France, where the dismay and anger for the deadly blow against its Canadian dominion had already preceded them.

At this time, however, the English people at home were utterly weary of the Seven Years' War in Europe, in which they had suffered severe losses in men and money with no advantage to the nation, and they were eager for peace at any price with their old enemy of France, who in Europe at least had proved victorious. The Jacobite rebellion for the young Pretender had alarmed the Government of King George, and

demanding all its energies. It was a 'far cry' to the bleak and barren shores of Cape Breton, and English statesmen at that time were willing to barter a fortress unnecessary, as they thought, to the North American colonies, for the sake of ending an unpopular war across the Channel. So, at the famous peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, Louisbourg was restored to the French to the immense satisfaction of the original owners, and to the burning indignation of the New Englanders who had dared so much, and fought so stubbornly for its possession.

One thing, however, the British Government did to make amends to New England for this short-sighted and selfish surrender. In order to tighten its grip upon Acadia, which was still seething with discontent, it was proposed to build a great city on the splendid harbour of Chebucto, which offered a safe shelter for British shipping. King George and his ministers held out liberal inducements to desirable settlers, offering free grants of land, arms and tools, and a year's provisions to all men of hardy physique and some skill in building, agriculture, and mechanical trades. Large numbers of people accepted these generous terms, and under the Hon. Edward Cornwallis, the future governor of the yet unbuilt city, 2,500 souls set sail from England in the warship *Sphinx*, and thirteen transports. Then to the astonished eyes of the Acadians and the Indian tribes who hung round on the scent of blood and scalps, there arose the city of Halifax, as for twelve months the hammers of a thousand carpenters, the axes of a thousand woodsmen, rang out in that wilderness.

The building of that great new town was a death-blow to the hopes of the French-Canadians for regaining possession of Acadia. Nevertheless, the spies from Louisbourg and Quebec redoubled their efforts to induce the Acadian peasants to rise against the English. In this they were aided by some fanatical priests, among whom was one named Le Loutre, famous in Canadian history for his hatred of our country, and for the fierce and cruel zeal with which he stirred up revolt

against the English rulers of Acadia. He exercised a tyrannical sway over the minds of the simple and superstitious French peasants, inflaming them against the Protestant heretics, and holding out threats and eternal punishment if they gave in their allegiance to the enemies of the Holy Catholic Church. This extraordinary man, whose ideas of Christianity seem to have been strangely warped, entered into friendly relations with the Indian tribes, and incited them to murderous raids upon defenceless homesteads of English settlers for the sake of scalps and booty. Under his influence Acadian peasants left their ploughs or workshops, and shouldered their muskets side by side with the bloody tomahawks of their savage allies. Among these bands of scalp-hunters there were also many French trappers and backwoodsmen, who found that the hair of English men and women fetched as good prices in certain quarters as beaver-skins and the fur of wild beasts. Many horrible murders, sometimes amounting to massacre, took place on the borders of Maine and Acadia, until at last the English Governors resolved to have no more of it.

Cornwallis, the Governor of Halifax, called together a meeting of representative citizens of Acadia, and put to them very clearly that unless they agreed to take the oath of allegiance to King George, and abide by it loyally, severe punishment would follow. With the exception of a few, however, they refused to take the oath.

The consequences were tragic and lamentable. The stern decree went forth that the Acadians were to be banished for ever from the homes they loved so well, and from the land they had made so prosperous with fair fields of golden corn and meadows of rich pasture. General Monckton seized 400 men at Beausejour, the other inhabitants escaping into the wilderness around. The inhabitants of Annapolis were captured by Major Handfield, and Captain Murray surrounded the little town of Piziquid, and obtained the surrender of the helpless people.

Then Colonel Winslow, with a small force of English soldiers, marched to the biggest and most prosperous town of Acadia, beautiful Grand Pré—the Great Meadow—and by sound of drum and Royal proclamation commanded the men to meet him in the church. The schoolmaster left his bench, the blacksmith his anvil, the farmer his fields, and all the men of Grand Pré assembled in wonder and alarm, and without a guess of the dread sentence to be passed upon them. Then the doors of the church were locked, the English soldiers surrounded it with loaded muskets, and in the dead silence within, from the altar steps where their priests had stood and blessed them, the English officer read out in a clear, cold voice that decree of banishment which would deprive them of home and property, and send them out as exiles to distant colonies. The Acadians were stunned. Horror was stamped upon the faces of those hardy, simple men. Then a great wail of grief and rage went up in Grand Pré.

But resistance was useless and impossible. The English soldiers were ready to fire at the word of command. There was nothing for it but to submit. The deportation of these despairing people took many long weeks to accomplish. The English ships in which they were to be carried away were a long time in coming. But at last they arrived, and under the guard of Colonel Winslow's redcoats the men were marched down to the shore in small companies, with the weeping wives and children clinging to them, and with their own tears falling fast. Ship after ship bore away these sorrowing peasants, to distribute them among the English colonies. Here, ruined, exiled, and separated from life-long friends, many of them broke their hearts, or lived in poverty, with the remembrance of the bitter wrong they had suffered, and with an anguish of regret for the good days of old in happy Acadia. It is a pathetic and tragic story, and must always be a painful reminiscence of New England history.

During recent years an attempt has been made by various writers to besmirch the character of the Acadians and to justify

their wholesale exportation. Doubtless at that critical period, when the struggle for supremacy between the English and French in North America was beginning to be a desperate one, it was a stern necessity for our colonists to get rid of a dangerous population settled upon territory closely adjoining one of our most unprotected States. There is no doubt, as we have seen, that some of the French settlers, hating the English with intense bitterness for having pulled down the lilies of France and set up the English lion, took their revenge by joining in Indian raids, slaying and scalping defenceless New Englanders with ruthless and savage cruelty. But the bulk of the Acadians were not of this stamp. One cannot blame them for cherishing a deep devotion to France and to the faith of their fathers—a devotion which made them the natural enemies of Englishmen and Puritans. Whatever the necessity for their removal, nothing can lessen the greatness of that tragedy which depopulated a prosperous colony, ruined so many families and homes, and scattered far and wide in miserable exile so many innocent and honest people.

After the first surrender of Acadia to the English, another force of the levies, under Sir William Phipps, drove back the French Commander Frontenac and his mixed army of disciplined soldiers and wild Indian braves, who, as they retreated to their own territory, destroyed the hamlets on their line of march and massacred their defenceless citizens.

Encouraged by the quick revenge they had obtained over the French-Canadians by the capture of Acadia and the hurried retreat of the invaders, the English resolved to strike a blow at the very heart of the enemy's territory by an attack on Quebec. A small fleet sailed up the St. Louis and, appearing without warning before the high cliffs upon which the city was perched, demanded, with more than common audacity, instant surrender. But Quebec was a natural fortress, and was also strongly defended by gun-batteries and garrison. It was not, like Port Royal in Acadia, to be had for the asking.

The English expedition ended in disaster, for the soldiers

and sailors of the fleet were ravaged by scurvy and fever, caused by want of fresh water and food. Phipps, recognising how impregnable seemed the city-fortress of Quebec against all assaults, and how futile it was to hurl his weakened, disease-stricken men against these iron rocks, set his sails for home, and returned to Boston without accomplishing that great, heroic feat which, in after years, a soldier mightier than he was to achieve, giving his life as the price of victory.

At this point we must close our brief survey of the foundation and development of the New England Colonies to take up the story of the great fight with France in Canada, to which these smaller actions, just recounted, were only the preliminaries. In this fierce struggle the English colonists took a share, though not so large a share, perhaps, as might have been expected. But it was from the mother-country that the men mostly came who, after many blunders, many tragedies, and many shortcomings, wiped all this out by an infinite valour and splendid heroism which wrested the Dominion of Canada from the French foe, and secured the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon race in North America.

PART III

THE CONQUEST OF CANADA

CHAPTER XII

THE FRENCH IN NORTH AMERICA

IN relating the story of the New England Colonies we reached a period when the British colonists first came into active antagonism with their French neighbours over the great borderland of Canada. It will be well, however, to retrace our steps a little and to learn something of the manner in which France built up an Empire in the West, with not less heroism, and in the face of even greater difficulties and dangers than our countrymen had known, and suffered, in their early colonial history.

As we have seen, New England had first been settled by people who had voluntarily exiled themselves from the mother-country for the sake of liberty in religion. The Puritans desired only to live in peace, and to build up a simple prosperity in their new land; and with this ambition they had done their best to keep on good terms with the North American Indians, having as little to do with them as possible. They were not inspired to civilize these savages, and it cannot be said that they made any great efforts to convert them to Christianity.

It was different with the French in Canada. The earliest Frenchmen to explore the great unknown land of the Western World came not for their own sake, not to trade, nor to build

up new houses and prosperous farms, not with the love of adventure, nor the desire for liberty ; but they came with the Cross in their hands, and with the fire of religious zeal in their hearts, eager to obey the commission of their Master, Christ. 'Go therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.'

In the whole history of the world there has been no finer heroism than that of these Jesuit priests, who two by two, and, often quite alone, wandered into the vastnesses of the unknown continent, going unarmed into the strongholds of fierce tribes like the Mohawks, the Iroquois, and the Blackfeet, of whose language they were ignorant, and whose welcome was often in the form of devilish tortures and awful death. Abandoning voluntarily all the comforts of civilized life, adopting Indian speech, clothes, and customs, these missionaries went out like sowers into the great wilderness, scattering their seed—the seed of the Gospel—over what was mostly stony ground. From the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, up the broad waterway of the Mississippi, round the great lakes of the Michigan, Huron, and Superior, across the placid waters of Lakes Erie and Ontario, to where Quebec and Montreal now stand as populous and magnificent cities, those French missionaries forced their way through virgin forests, and far stretching prairies, in Indian canoes, or upon frail craft made by their own hands out of the trunks of fallen trees, facing death at every step, suffering hunger and thirst and disease, yet inspired always with a sublime faith that the Divine Power would sustain them.

It must be confessed that the results achieved by those courageous missionaries were not in proportion to the perils and hardships they encountered. It is true they succeeded in baptizing many Indians who, yielding to the eloquence of the priests, were willing to worship Christ as the true God. But these 'Christian Indians' do not seem to have understood the

spirit of their new religion, and the majority of them remained as fierce and untamed in their instincts as when they worshipped their imaginary gods and devils. Too often, indeed, they abandoned their faith altogether, renounced their promises, and with tomahawks and poisoned arrows massacred the men who had been their teachers. Those who maintained their allegiance to Christianity were rejected and despised by those of their own tribes, and were often massacred themselves by those hostile savages around them.

Christianity, indeed, did not bring peace, but war, among the native races of Canada, for the French priests, misinterpreting the principles of their own faith, were often induced to lead their converts against the unconverted tribes who threatened the Christian settlements, and Christian Indians on the war-path were no more merciful and no less bloodthirsty than the braves who followed the superstitions of their forefathers. So the early history of French Canada is one long record of scalping, murder, and fearful tortures, of native villages given over to the flames, and of bloody reprisals between tribe and tribe.

Although the French missionaries were among the first to explore the lone lands and great waterways of Canada, there was another class of men who dared the same dangers, and gained the same knowledge, but from very different motives. These were the French trappers, or, as they were called, *couvreurs des bois*, the runners of the woods. These were hardy fellows who had left France for a life of adventure, and who, to gain a livelihood in the New World, scoured the forests and mountains of the North-West for the furs of wild animals, which they brought down to Quebec and Montreal, where they were shipped to France to supply the demand of a luxurious aristocracy. With musket and bowie knife, wearing the moccasins of the Indian, and with all the knowledge of woodcraft and forest warfare which the Indians possessed as a kind of second nature, these trappers wandered to the far north and far west, accompanied only by teams of half-savage dogs who

carried the skins stripped from the victims of their masters' guns.

In many cases these Frenchmen lost all signs of their civilization, and adopted Indian ways and speech, marrying native squaws, and rearing children who were no less savage than if their fathers had been Indian braves. These half-breeds, indeed, the sons of French trappers and Indian mothers, often inherited the vices of both races, and in the war between England and France in North America, they were often distinguished by a fiendish cruelty and by a cunning treachery in excess of the worst qualities of the pure-bred Indian.

The French Governors of Canada were a very different type of men to the Governors of New England. The latter, as we have seen, were mostly elected by the Puritan colonists, and were true fathers of the people, anxious for their welfare, and ruling them with a justice that was strict, but above suspicion of ignoble motives. But in Canada, the Governors who came from France were in many cases needy and impoverished aristocrats, who considered exile from the Court to be the worst of misfortunes, and whose chief ambition was to amass a fortune as quickly as possible, so that they could return to spend it in renewed luxury and license.

Large sums of money were sent out to Canada by Louis XIV. and his Ministers, who were truly anxious for the prosperity and progress of this Empire in the West. But by an intricate system of corruption the Governors and the public officials of Quebec and Montreal appropriated a good deal of these supplies for their own private needs, falsifying the accounts which were sent back to France, and demanding further grants from the royal treasury.

Nevertheless, French Canada advanced in prosperity and increased in population with rapid strides. Louis XIV. took an active interest in his colonies, and a steady stream of hardy Frenchmen were sent out to New France, persuaded by free grants of land and lavish advances of money. Even many of the younger members of the French nobility were induced to

leave their country by promises of royal favour and of high-sounding titles, and in Canada they maintained the old feudal traditions as lords of lonely forest lands and seigneurs of wooden châteaux and poorly-cultivated farms.

On the other hand, the poverty of the French peasants under the old régime, ground down as they were by enormous taxes, which went to support an idle and luxurious aristocracy, was so miserable and hopeless that large numbers eagerly accepted the royal grants of land in Canada, and took their industrious habits, their thrift and intelligence, to a new world, where they could work for the benefit of themselves and their families.

To further increase the population of Canada, Louis XIV. and his Ministers periodically shipped out cargoes of young girls, who willy-nilly were to become the wives of the young French bachelors who had preceded them. Nor did the bachelors have any choice in the matter. To remain unmarried was a crime punished by severe penalties, and the wilful Benedick was brought up before the court, and required to show the reason why he preferred a single life. On the other hand, he would receive a Government dowry with his bride, and a handsome bonus was the reward of each married couple who presented Canada with a new citizen.

With such inducements to marry, it may be guessed that the population of Canada rapidly multiplied. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Quebec, the capital city of Canada, contained only some 5,000 or 6,000 souls—at the most, no more than 8,000.

Here, on the heights above the St. Lawrence River, sweeping in a broad and majestic curve towards the great gulf, many fine public buildings—churches, convents, schools, and hospitals—rose above the quaint little houses and narrow streets of the French city, where Indians in moccasins and feathered head-dresses, trappers with dog-sleighs laden with skins, soldiers in the uniforms of historic regiments of France, little nuns in the white-winged bonnets of their Order of

St. Vincent and St. Paul, elegant noblemen in powdered wigs and silk coats and knee-breeches, ladies in the brocaded gowns and high coiffures à la *Pompadour*, and citizens working at their shop-doors, as they might be seen in the streets of old Paris, made up a population as picturesque as any in the world.

Here was the seat of government. In the château of St. Louis, perched upon a high rock, where cannon pointed grimly over the channel, as if defying assault, dwelt the Viceroy of Louis, all-powerful as Governor of Canada, and as autocratic as the King of France himself.

In Quebec also were two other high personages, who each in his own way had authority over the lives and destinies of the French colonists. The Intendant was the chief legal officer and the administrator of the colonial finances. To some extent he shared the Governor's duties, and acted as correspondent with the Court of France. Generally he was hand in glove with the Governor in the crooked management of the public money, and shared the spoil collected in an unscrupulous way from this source, and from the profits of the fur trade which passed through his hands. The other great personage was the Archbishop who ruled over the Catholic Church in Canada, and regulated the conscience and religious duties of the people. In addition to these three great men who held the reins of power, there was a military commander who had charge of the garrisons in Canada, consisting of a few regular regiments from France and a militia raised from the young, able-bodied citizens of the colony. Between this officer and the Governor there was often a good deal of jealousy and friction, which did not contribute to the safety of the French Empire in the West. Nevertheless, in the hour of danger such jealousies were generally forgotten, and both the rulers and the people of Canada were animated with a hearty spirit of patriotism, a fine courage, and a belief in their own supremacy, which made them a dangerous and powerful enemy to the nation which was to come in conflict with them.

CHAPTER XIII

FIGHTS ALONG THE FRONTIER

IN 1748 the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, which has already been referred to, resulted in an armed truce between the French and English in North America. But during the next five years there was a silent rivalry at work between the colonists of each nation which sooner or later was bound to result in a conflict more deadly than had yet taken place. The borderland between French Canada and the English colonies was vaguely marked by the Ohio Valley, which ran between the long chain of the Alleghany Mountains and Lakes Erie and Ontario. This was a debatable land claimed by both races. Already English adventurers and traders had pushed across the mountains to barter with the Indians of the Six Nations whose little villages were scattered over the broad plains, and the eyes of English agriculturists were already coveting the rich and fertile soil which formed the happy hunting-grounds of the native tribes.

But the French also had their eyes upon this great territory, and the Governors of Canada were secretly determined that it should form a part of their dominions. In 1749 an expedition left Montreal under a French captain named De Celoron, and, crossing Lake Ontario, carrying their canoes round the Falls of Niagara, and then paddling over the placid bosom of Lake Erie, they set out on a long and difficult march, through great forests and down narrow winding torrents, until they reached a fork of the Ohio River, now known as the Alleghany. Here De Celoron produced from his light baggage a number of little leaden plates, upon which had been inscribed the following words :

“Year 1749, in the reign of Louis XV., King of France. De Celoron, commanding the detachment sent by the Marquis de

la Gatissonière, Commandant-General of New France, to re-establish tranquillity in certain Indian villages in these cantons, have buried this plate at the meeting of the Ohio and Tchadakon this 29th July, as a mark of the renewal of possession which we had formerly taken of the aforesaid river Ohio and all its feeders, and all territory upon both sides of the former streams as former Kings of France have enjoyed or ought to have enjoyed, and which they have maintained by force of arms and by treaties, especially by those of Ryswick, Utrecht, and Aix-la-Chapelle.'

The doughty French captain, no doubt with much self-satisfaction, nailed one of these leaden plates to a tree, and buried another at the foot of the tree, as a warning that 'trespassers will be prosecuted.' Then he and his little band continued their adventurous journey, visiting the wigwams of the Delawares, Mingoes, and other Indian tribes, to whom they gave plenty of 'fire-water' and many fine promises of the glorious things they might expect if they were friendly to the great French nation. They were also warned in many eloquent speeches to beware of the rascally English, who came, under pretence of trading, to seize their land and dispossess them of their hunting-grounds. The English traders themselves, many of whom were encountered by Captain De Celoron, were rebuked for presumption in venturing into French territory, and threatened with severe punishment if they should be found there on future occasions. Meantime, wherever he went our doughty French captain kept nailing up his little leaden plates until his stock was exhausted, when, after a journey of 3,000 miles, he returned to Montreal to report the result of his adventures.

That result so far was not very great. Leaden plates are all very well in their way, but they do not frighten English colonists who cannot read French. To insure the possession of the Ohio Valley to His Gracious Majesty King Louis XV. some other force was necessary. Accordingly, some few years

later, outposts were stationed in forts built here and there along the border lines, and these little garrisons were a much more effective sign of French dominion than all the eloquent proclamations on the trunks of trees. They were not only small strongholds forming effective military bases in any campaigns against the English, but they deeply impressed the imagination of the Indian tribes of the Six Nations, who were led to believe in the power and energy of France as a protection against the aggressions of the English.

But the English colonists were beginning to realize that their own claim to the Ohio Valley would be but a visionary one if they allowed the existence of the French forts without a challenge. Even the English Government, little as it had formerly understood colonial problems, were now anxious to put a check upon these French encroachments.

Accordingly it was resolved to send a formal warning to the French outposts demanding their withdrawal.

The messenger selected for this important duty was a young Virginian gentleman named George Washington, who in after-years was destined to play a still more important part in the history of North America. He belonged to a family of some repute and considerable wealth. His father died when he was a young boy, but, with his elder brother Laurence, he had received a fair education, though perhaps somewhat below that of his class. He was skilled in farming and all the sports of youth, having an especial fondness for hunting, and in spite of the disadvantages of his upbringing, there was something of the student in his character, which was more serious and less boisterous than that of his companions. He is described as having a grave and old-fashioned courtesy of manner, being punctilious in his speech and scrupulous in his dress, while his code of honour was a high one, and his sense of personal dignity was tempered by a kindly consideration for the feelings of others, and especially for his inferiors. Young as he was, being only twenty years of age when he was selected by Governor Dinwiddie, of Virginia, for the mission

to the French outposts, he had already obtained the esteem of his fellow-colonists as a man of unusual ability, courage, and strength of purpose. This estimate of his character was shown to be a just one by the determined way in which he conducted the duties entrusted to him.

With a little band of six or seven English colonists, including a famous frontiersman named Gist, and about the same number of Indians, Washington marched through 400 miles of forest land to the French fort of Le Bœuf, twenty miles south of Lake Erie. It was no easy journey at that time, and the discomforts and perils of pushing day after day and week after week through tangled brushwood and dark woods, with the autumn rains fully upon them continually, may not be lightly passed over. In December Washington duly reached Fort le Bœuf, and to the French officer, St. Pierre, delivered his message from the Governor of Virginia resenting the occupation of British territory, and requesting his withdrawal. St. Pierre treated Washington courteously, but in no hesitating terms sent back an answer, which was a blunt defiance of the British demands.

With this missive Washington set out again upon the homeward journey. To save time he took with him only one companion, the man named Gist, leaving the others to follow at their leisure, and, wrapped in an Indian cloak, with a rifle over his shoulder and a scanty stock of provisions, the young Virginian dared a great adventure. The forests were now silent and dead in the grip of a great frost, and the rivers were frozen over. But with grim resolution Washington and his companion hurried back over those 400 miles, anxious lest at any moment those silent woods might ring with the Indian war-whoop. Once, indeed, a savage, prowling on their trail, fired point-blank at Washington, but without effect. He was seized by the two travellers, and with his arms tied to his sides, was marched in front of them for a whole day's journey, lest he should bring his tribe upon their track. Arriving at the Alleghany River, they found it choked with

masses of floating ice. With 'one poor hatchet,' as Washington relates in his diary, they built a raft of frozen logs and endeavoured to steer it between the ice-blocks, but one of them, crushing against the frail craft, knocked Washington into the freezing water. He swam to a little island, Gist following his example, and they passed a miserable night in their wet clothes, which froze hard upon them. Gist was dangerously frost-bitten, but still, on the morrow and for many days they plodded on through the naked, gloomy woods, having to hide at times from bands of half-famished Indians, and passing horrid sights of scalped corpses mangled by wolves, until at last they reached the borders of Virginia. Then Washington, obtaining a horse, left his sorely-stricken friend in the care of kindly hands, and rode swiftly with his letter to Governor Dinwiddie at Williamstown.

That letter was interpreted both by the French and English as a challenge and defiance, and both sides prepared for a conflict. Another fort was built by the French at the head of the Ohio, where it forks into the two tributary rivers of the Alleghany and the Monongahela, and this was named after the French Governor Duquesne, while reinforcements from Quebec and Montreal were poured steadily into the disputed territory.

The English, however, had received the consent of the Government to meet force by force, and to build fort against fort.

Once again young Washington led an expedition to the French, but this time with power to enforce his demands by powder and shot. He was in command of 150 Virginians, and was followed at a considerable distance by a second battalion of South Carolinian Militia, who considered themselves, with a fine sense of superiority as 'British regulars,' worth a good deal more than Virginian volunteers. Washington and his men, however, careless of such trumpery jealousies, pushed on for sixty miles, until they came to some rolling grass lands

round a small English trading station known as the Great Meadows, where they learnt that a French force was marching against them; and the young Virginian, with that energy which was his dominant characteristic, made a night march in the hope of surprising the enemy. In this he was not disappointed. He discovered the French, under the command of a young officer of noble birth named Couton de Jumonville, lying ambushed in a deep ravine, where doubtless they had hoped to shoot down the unsuspecting English as they marched through in their advance on Fort Duquesne. At the approach of Washington and his Virginians they sprang up, rifle in hand, but received a well-directed volley before they could open fire. De Jumonville fell dead with a number of his comrades, and the remaining twenty were taken prisoners.

Washington then retired to the Great Meadows, where he was joined by the men of South Carolina. The officer of the militia gave himself fine airs, and refused to be dictated to by Washington, and there was considerable annoying friction between the two contingents. However, brushing aside all this petty foolishness, the Virginian officer proceeded to direct the construction of simple entrenchments and stockades, which, with a touch of grim humour, he called Fort Necessity. His situation was not an enviable one. He had many wounded men on his hands, his supplies were scanty, and, cut off from speedy reinforcements in a lonely territory, he was aware from the information of friendly Indians that a strong French force, with the assistance of bands of braves on the war-path, were advancing upon him, while at Fort Duquesne, no more than seventy miles distant, a garrison of no less than 19,000 men had been assembled.

The storm was not long in breaking upon Fort Necessity. One morning the wild whoop of the Indians rang through the surrounding woods, and the sun flashed upon the blue and white tunics of French soldiers of the line. The young Virginian relied upon his guns to mow down the besieging force while they were served behind the rough stockade he had so

wisely erected. But the French had learnt something of the war-craft of their Indian allies, and were not inclined to rush the fortifications by a 'frontal attack.' They took cover behind the trees which surrounded Fort Necessity within rifle range, and from this vantage-ground they poured a deadly fire into the English camp. In the hour of danger the men of South Carolina put their precious dignity on one side and worked valiantly shoulder to shoulder with their Virginian comrades. Washington, calm and cold, directed the defence, and inspired his men with his own determination. But after fighting under torrents of rain, which turned the ground beneath their feet to a quagmire of mud and soaked them to the skin, when 100 of their men were dead or dying and their ammunition was quite spent, there was nothing left but to surrender on the best possible terms. Accordingly a messenger was sent out under a flag of truce, and, as the French had suffered almost as heavily under the English fire, they agreed to allow the defenders of Fort Necessity to march out with the honours of war, on condition that Washington's prisoners should be liberated, and all the guns save one surrendered to the victors.

It was with a heavy heart that Washington returned with his wounded and half-starved men across the Alleghany to Virginia, harassed by Indians, who hung on their flanks lusting for scalps, killing the horses, and stealing the scant baggage that still remained. Nevertheless, no blame attaches to Washington and his comrades, who had done their duty bravely, and had failed only in the face of overpowering odds.

CHAPTER XIV

A GREAT DISASTER

A YEAR passed, and once again the tramp of armed men awoke the echoes of the woods over the many ridges of the Alleghany Mountains and along the valley of the Ohio towards Fort Duquesne. But this time it was not a small regiment of Virginian volunteers in homespuns. For the first time in the history of North America the virgin forests and green, rolling prairies, where Indians had pitched their camps and the wild buffalo had roamed, were gay with the scarlet jackets and the tall mitre hats, the plastered pigtails, the pipe-clay trappings, and the fresh, ruddy faces of British soldiers from the mother-country. Although England and France still kept up a pretence of peace, each country was preparing for a great struggle on the borderland of their colonial possessions in America, and each Government had sent out famous fighting regiments to stiffen the ranks of the colonials and the Indian tribes who would soon be engaged in deadly conflict.

For many months these English regiments had been quartered in Virginia, waiting for supplies to be collected for the long march across the mountains, when, as they fondly believed, they would sweep the French garrisons from the frontier forts and send them flying in one long line of retreat. During that time of waiting there were gay doings at Alexandria, opposite the present city of Washington. Young British officers from the Court of St. James's were charmed with the fresh beauty and simplicity of the Virginian ladies, and these, on their side, were delighted to learn the latest fashions of London, to hear the latest gossip of the English Court, to dance quadrilles with young gentlemen who had such elegant manners, and to play the little game of love with gallant young dandies who were so much more 'genteel' than the colonial squires, who were more

ed in farming and hunting than in the art of bowing and ing pretty speeches.

etween the British officers and the colonial gentlemen was not so much friendliness. The latter resented the rcilious airs of the new-comers, who considered themselves astly superior to any colonial, not only in the social graces, out in the art of war. Holding the King's commission, the youngest subaltern among them held a higher rank than the most distinguished leaders in the colonial volunteers and militia—men of long experience in forest warfare and Indian strategy, whose knowledge was a hundred times more valuable than fine manners and gay uniforms.

There was certainly not much zeal among the Virginian gentlemen to cooperate with the English officers in the proposed campaign, and General Braddock—a sturdy, hot-tempered, lion-hearted old soldier—who had been given the supreme command of the English forces, swore a good many dreadful oaths and cursed the lack of patriotism and lack of energy of the colonials before he could get together his waggons, collect his supplies, and organize the militia regiments for a forward movement to Fort Duquesne.

He found one man, however, among the Virginian gentlemen whose advice was always at his service, and whose influence over his neighbours and fellow-colonials was a means of dispelling some of the enmity and jealousy between the British and Virginian officers. This was our former acquaintance, Colonel George Washington, who was placed on Braddock's staff, and became his most valuable aide-de-camp.

The march to Fort Duquesne was at last commenced in June of 1755. For a whole month the British regiments sweltered on in the fierce heat of an American summer, nearly suffocated in their stiff and heavy uniforms, stung by flies of various kinds, tortured by the undergrowth which whipped their faces as they forced their way through great forests, slipping and stumbling down rocky paths; while behind came the grunting oxen dragging the baggage-waggons, the ammu-

nition carts and gun-carriages, jolting over stony tracks or sinking up to the axle in occasional quagmires. So slow was the pace that, for fear of using up his supplies, which had only been reckoned for nine weeks, General Braddock left 600 men behind with those who had fallen sick, while he, with 1,200 regulars and 200 provincials, pressed on more speedily. Washington was one of the men on the sick-list, suffering from fever, but he had extracted a solemn promise from Braddock that he should be carried to the forward column as soon as it reached the Monongahela River, where it was probable the enemy might be in force.

The General was as good as his word, and on July 8 Colonel Washington was brought up from the rear, still weak and suffering, but with an eager desire to be in the fighting-line, and took part in the passage of the river. This was accomplished with all the panoply and pageantry of European warfare. Forging the river at its shallowest point, the red-coats proceeded company by company, with colours flying, drums beating, and bugles sounding, and re-formed on the further bank. It must have seemed a strange and startling sight to those hundreds of black eyes which gazed furtively between the leaves of the forest trees—the Indian scouts of the French force which, unknown to the English, was lying in ambush at no great distance.

General Braddock did not walk blindly into this ambush. According to the rules of war, he sent out scouts in advance and marched forward in distended order with flanking parties. But presently the reconnoitring parties fell back with the news that the enemy were close at hand, and then, suddenly, a man in Indian dress, but with the gorget of a French officer, came running out of the trees into the open road. He stood in front of the advancing columns and deliberately waved his hat. It was De Beaujeu, the leader of the French battalions. At his signal the blood-curdling whoop of Indian braves fell for the first time upon the ears of young British soldiers, and in a moment there appeared among the trees to right and left

swiftly-moving figures in the blue and white uniforms of France and the stealthy forms of Indian braves in the waving feathers, the hideous paint, and the soft moccasins of their war-dress.

A storm of bullets swept through the trees upon the startled regiments who had come to a halt in the road, pattering upon them in single shots from the hidden marksmen like the fall of hail, each bullet finding its way to the brain or heart of some young pigtailed Englishman. General Braddock roared out the command to return fire, but the volley of the English muskets hurtled vainly for the most part against the trunks of trees, only finding a human mark when some Indian brave left the cover of his trunk for a moment to get within closer range. Still the bullets swept on in a cross-fire upon the British regiments until the roadway was piled with dead and dying men, with wounded and maddened horses, and with panic-stricken soldiers, who found themselves at the mercy of an invisible foe.

The English officers, dandies though they were, showed they were made of the right stuff after all, and exposed themselves heroically to the fire in the attempt to put heart into their men. General Braddock himself was like an old lion at bay, and did his utmost to prevent a confusion of ranks and companies which were fast becoming inextricable. The guns under Gage did some damage to the enemy—slight as it was compared to our own terrible losses—but Dumas, who had succeeded to the French command, manœuvred his Indians and sharpshooters under cover of the woods close upon the flanks of the English, and their continued fire became at last so deadly that, in despair, the bugles sounded the retreat, and, leaving everything to the enemy—guns, waggons, horses, cattle, and baggage—the broken regiments fell back to the river ford.

In the flight General Braddock was mortally wounded, but with his dying gasps he endeavoured to rally his men. There was no pursuit when once the river was passed. The French-

Indians were too busy with the dead and wounded and all the booty that lay to their hands. No pen could describe those horrors. Dying soldiers blew out their brains, or begged for death from their own wounded comrades, to escape the torture of the scalping-knife. The Indian braves swept like vultures upon the living and the dead, tearing the hair from their heads, stripping them of their clothes, and screeching their devilish war-cries in the frenzy of victory. The screams of the wounded horses and cattle mingled with these awful sounds of human ferocity and with the last shots, still finding their way from scattered marksmen in the trees to the stampeding Englishmen.

Such is the terrible story of what, under the name of 'Braddock's Defeat,' soon caused the utmost consternation not only throughout British North America, but was heard with the most violent indignation in England, where poor General Braddock, who had paid the cost of defeat with his life, was abused, not with much justice, for stupidity and recklessness. In his defence, it must be said that the young soldiers under his command were absolutely raw to the art of forest warfare, and without any previous experience of the nerve-destroying ferocity of Indian enemies. Nor was the science of European warfare in which poor Braddock had received his training quite the same thing as the strategy of Indian braves and half-breed trappers, who could move through a forest without cracking a twig, and take cover behind a tree-trunk as if they had the cloak of invisibility.

Braddock's defeat was a frightful disaster to the English, not to be reckoned only by the lives of those poor young soldiers whose mutilated bodies lay on the other side of the Monongahela River. The Indian tribes who had been waiting to see which was the winning side of the two pale-face nations had no doubt now that the English were the under-dogs, and that it would pay them best to serve the French with tomahawk and scalping-knife. All their savage instincts broke forth, and a great lust of blood swept through the Six Nations.

The passes across the mountains were beaten hard with moccasined feet, and bands of braves scoured the frontiers of the English colonies, murdering the defenceless settlers in a wholesale slaughter. Here and there an English fort along the line of the Mohawk River, running west to Lake Ontario, or in the valley of the Hudson River, running north to Lake George and Lake Champlain, acted as breakwaters against the tide of scalp-hunters; but the little garrisons were more anxious to keep within the shelter of their strongholds than to make any counter-attacks against the seething mass of savages gathering on the war-trails from the St. Lawrence to the Ohio.

CHAPTER XV

A BARONET OF THE BACKWOODS

THERE was one man at this time who, with his single influence, did more to save the British Empire in North America than the united forces of the colonial States. He stands out a picturesque, heroic, yet somewhat grotesque figure in that chapter of history—a character such as one might find in the romantic stories of Mayne Reid or Fenimore Cooper, but not easily realized as belonging to real life.

This was a young Irishman of good birth, who had settled in the back-country of the Redhawk River, where he built up a substantial fortune by trading with the Indians, and by cattle-farming on a large scale. He had married an Indian squaw, the daughter of a powerful chief, and in a great wooden house kept open hospitality for the Indian tribes in his neighbourhood, with whom he was on the best of terms.

There was a good deal of the savage in his own nature and a wild strain of imagination, which enabled him to find a strange pleasure in leading a primitive, barbarous life in the wilderness, as a kind of ‘great White Chief’ among the redskins.

Speaking their language perfectly, and understanding their superstitions and passions, he invited them periodically to great feasts, when oxen were roasted whole and 'fire-water' was drunk in gallons. Not above painting his face and dressing in Indian clothes, he would take a part in their wild war-dances, and for hours together would harangue them in florid and eloquent speeches after the style of their own interminable oratory, or would sit smoking the pipe of peace, while their own medicine-men and chiefs indulged in guttural monologues at equal length.

It was this man now who at this critical period used his utmost influence to bring over the friendship of the Six Nations to the side of the English. He feasted them as he had never done before, gave them never-ending supplies of spirit, and persuaded them, by bribes and lavish promises, to come over from the French side. He succeeded at last in making them waver in their allegiance to France in Canada, and in gaining some of the tribes as allies of the English. But for the consummate skill with which he played upon their pride, appealing to their friendship, and awaking in them a spirit of loyalty to the nation which had been consistently well-disposed to them, the perils of the English colonies would have been even greater than they undoubtedly were at this time.

When Shirley, the Governor of Massachusetts, endeavoured to repair the disaster of Braddock's defeat by raising a large force of colonial volunteers, Johnson was made a general, and given the command of 6,000 provincial troops, with instructions to advance against Lake Champlain, to drive them back, and occupy Crown Point, on the south-western shore of the lake. Johnson increased his little army by the valuable addition of 300 Mohawk braves, and, with supreme confidence in his own powers, set out on his dangerous mission.

As he proceeded up the Hudson River, he left behind him a section of his force to build forts which would serve as a stronghold for retreat, if such were necessary; and in this way Fort

Edward, which was afterwards to become famous as the scene of many a stern fight, sprang into existence.

Johnson himself left the Hudson River, and pressed on to Lake George, carrying his stores, guns, and ammunition with infinite difficulty over rocky ridges and through dense woods, until, on the northern shore of the lake, he halted his small army, now consisting of about 3,000 men, and proceeded to throw up entrenchments and stockades which afterwards developed into Fort William Henry, of tragic fame.

Presently Johnson learnt that from Lake Champlain a French officer named Dieskau was advancing with a strong force of Canadians, Indians, and regular infantry. The Irishman, with the rash gallantry of his race, was not content to await them behind his stockade, but sent out 1,000 men to meet them and give them a 'warm welcome.' This was against the advice of the old Mohawk chief, who gave his opinion that these men were 'too few to be successful and too many to be killed.' However, he did not shirk his duty, and rode at the head of 200 of his braves who took part in this forward movement. Johnson himself remained with the main body at the rough fort, and to his infinite surprise and rage he presently found his advance column tumbling back in hot retreat, bringing many dead, but with many gaps in their ranks that told a tale of tragedy. They had fallen into a carefully prepared ambush of the French, and had been taken entirely by surprise. The poor old Mohawk chief had been one of the first to fall, and the fire was so severe that, in the words of Dieskau, the French officer who afterwards described the scene to Johnson, 'the column was crumpled up like a pack of cards.'

Johnson was beside himself with vexation at the disaster, but this did not prevent him from strengthening his rough fortifications and rallying his panic-stricken men. When Dieskau and his mixed force came up they found they had a harder task than they had reckoned on. Johnson's provincials were sharpshooters all, and the guns were served gallantly, so that the

French and their Indian allies were severely punished. Seeing them waver and give way, Johnson leapt over the stockade, and, leading a charge of cheering New Englanders, swept the enemy off the field with tomahawk and bayonet.

Dieskau was taken prisoner, being severely wounded, and after the fight it took all Johnson's influence over the Indians to keep them from murdering the French officer in revenge for the death of their old chief that morning.

'What do they want?' inquired the Frenchman, as he sat propped up against the back of a tree.

'Want?' said Johnson, with grim humour, and surprised by the simplicity of his prisoner. 'To burn you, by the Lord!—eat you, and put you in their pipes and smoke you. But never fear; you shall be safe with me, else they shall kill us both.'

This victory, which was the first gleam of success after the tragedy at Fort Duquesne, aroused immense enthusiasm among the English in America, and even more at home. Johnson for his achievement was made a Baronet, and Parliament voted him a gift of £5,000.

CHAPTER XVI

THE TRAGEDY OF FORT WILLIAM HENRY

It seems to us extraordinary at the present day that all the fighting between the French and English in Canada took place when the two nations were nominally at peace. In the following year, however (1756), the vain pretence could no longer be kept up, and war was formally declared. The struggle between the French-Canadians and New Englanders could no longer be left to comparatively small forces of regular soldiers then stationed in North America, and both Governments prepared to send out strong reinforcements. Canada was then under the governorship of a French nobleman named De Vaudreuil, and one of the most experienced and gallant Generals of France,

Montcalm—or, to give him his full title, Louis Joseph, Marquis de Montcalm-Gozon de Saint-Veran—was sent out with 1,200 picked men from the famous regiments of La Sarre and Royal Rousillon to take supreme command of the French forces.

On the English side Shirley, the Governor of Massachusetts, who with very little success had hitherto commanded the New Englanders and the few English regiments in North America, was to be superseded by the Earl of Loudon, with General Abercrombie as second in command.

The first honours in this new era of the war lay with Montcalm, who had a fine and daring genius, to which the mediocre abilities of the English officers could not compare.

The French General quickly massed a strong body of troops at Ticonderoga, a little to the north of Fort William Henry, and taking with him the regiments of La Sarre and Guiénne, seasoned veterans of France, whose banners were emblazoned with the names of many victories, as well as 3,000 Canadians and Indians, bore down silently and swiftly upon an English fort at Oswego, which was isolated on the eastern shore of Lake Ontario. A garrison of about 1,000 men under command of Colonel Mercer had been left here by Governor Shirley; many of these were broken-down soldiers whose health had given way under the strain of long marches, or who had been wounded in the constant skirmishes with Indian scouts. There were, in addition, about 600 non-combatants, including 120 women and children, people who had fled to the fort to escape the terrors of Indian raids on their scattered homesteads.

The garrison was wholly unprepared for attack and completely taken by surprise when they found themselves surrounded by Montcalm's little army. They were at the mercy of the French guns mounted on the river bank within 500 yards of their entrenchments, and terrorized by the wild hordes of Indians who attacked the stockade on every side with blood-curdling yells. They fought with the courage of

despair. Colonel Mercer himself was killed by a cannon-shot, and his death increased the panic of the defenders. It was a frightful scene. The wooden buildings were fast being splintered by the crashing volleys of the enemy, the women or children were shrieking in terror, every moment a man fell mortally wounded, and the bloodthirsty clamour of the redskins foreboded a general massacre. To save the women and children, if for nothing else, it was decided to surrender at once unconditionally. It was certainly the wisest course. Even then Montcalm had the greatest difficulty in restraining the scalping-knives of the Indians, which he would have probably been powerless to do had they suffered much loss. The entire garrisons, stores, guns, and ammunition, with 200 barges on the lake laden with further armament and supplies, came into the possession of the French. Montcalm then ruthlessly proceeded to wipe Oswego off the face of the earth, burning its buildings, and all stores which he could not conveniently remove, and then, with his prisoners and the trophies of his victory, departed in triumph.

It was not long before the Marquis de Montcalm gave another proof of his energy and skilful strategy. It was Fort William Henry, to the south of the French stronghold at Ticonderoga, which was now his object of attack. Since Johnson had first commenced the fortifications the place had been considerably strengthened, and a strong garrison of about 2,500 men, English regulars and colonial militia, had been posted there under command of an officer named Colonel Monroe. At Fort Edward, a little to the south on the Hudson River, General Webb, who was temporarily in command of the American army, pending the arrival of the Earl of Loudon, was garrisoned with a smaller force consisting of about 1,600 men.

During the months that followed his victory at Oswego, Montcalm had been stealthily preparing his plans for the annihilation of the two forts. He now sent messages to the Canadian tribes—the great nation of the Iroquois—and at

Montreal there gathered from far and wide thousands of painted warriors, who, in return for further services on the war-path, demanded present supplies of French brandy, of which the most tremendous quantity seemed incapable of quenching their fiery thirst. Their presence at Montreal, excited as much by the prospect of scalps as by the strong potions they indulged in, was a source of terror to the inhabitants, and of constant anxiety to the French officers, lest they should get beyond control. In order to keep them in a good temper, Montcalm himself had to attend their waltzes and dreary ceremonies, giving and listening to interminable speeches. It is related by a distinguished French officer named Bougainville that he relieved Montcalm of some of this labour, and chanted the song of war in a lengthy, monotonous sing-song, of which the only words, repeated over and over again, were: 'We will trample the English under our feet, under our feet, under our feet; we will trample the English under our feet.'

The Christian Indians from the missions were also coming in from every part under the influence of their priests.

'The orgies of these so-called Christians,'* writes Mr. A. G. Bradley in his splendid story of the war, 'were as wild as if they had never so much as set eyes upon the Cross. They went clad, it is true, but they dyed their clothes instead of their naked bodies, while their faces grinned hideously through thick layers of red and yellow and green paint, smeared on with grease and soot. All alike wore the tufted scalp lock on their shaven heads, decorated with nodding plumes of feathers; while heavy rings dragged their ears down on to their shoulders. A gorget encircled their neck, and a profusely ornamented belt their waist, whence hung the tomahawk and the scalping-knife. The chief entertainment at their feasts may be described as boasting competitions, in which one performer at a time, striding up and down the line with

* 'The Fight with France for North America,' by A. G. Bradley; Constable, London.

a gory bullock's head in his hand, exhausted the whole Indian vocabulary in describing the feats of valour he had performed, and would perform again.'

When the ice had melted on the rivers and lakes, and the iron grip of a Canadian winter—which made the progress of a large army difficult and dangerous—was sufficiently relaxed by the first warmth of spring sunshine, Montcalm gathered together his miscellaneous troops and made his way across the waters of Lake Champlain and Lake George towards the doomed Fort William Henry. Never before had the placid bosoms of those great lakes been disturbed by such a crowd of flat-bottomed craft, densely laden with armed men, followed in their wake by a seemingly endless procession of Indian canoes; and never had the sunlight in the great woods shone upon such varied colours and costumes as when the soldiers of many an historic regiment of France, clad in the gay uniforms and fine trappings of the period, marched in the van of tribe after tribe of painted redskins, and of battalion on battalion of Canadian sharpshooters in rough homespuns, with cartridge-belts and moccasins.

Swiftly and with consummate strategy Montcalm bore down upon the English fort, sending his trusty and gallant officer, De Névis, with a strong force to cut the line of communications between Fort William Henry and Fort Edward, while he mounted his forty siege-guns in a commanding position and set his men, under cover of the night, to throw up trenches as near as possible to the English lines.

The fate of Colonel Monroe and his beleaguered fort was already determined. There was a slight chance that General Webb might be daring and lucky enough to cut his way through to the rescue, and with this forlorn hope Monroe sent messengers, who risked their lives in carrying urgent entreaties for help to that officer. But Webb was either a coward or saw that the odds were too heavy against success, and determined not to risk an almost certain defeat.

Monroe and his men served their guns until nearly all were

burst and their ammunition exhausted, but Montcalm surrounded them with a shower of shot which threatened to wipe the whole fort out of existence if it were long continued. Twice the French officer, Bougainville, came under a flag of truce—the second time being led blindfolded into the fort—to offer terms of surrender, and twice his offer was refused. But at last, when the situation was seen to be utterly hopeless, the white flag fluttered up over the shattered stockade.

The surrender was unconditional, but Montcalm was a chivalrous as well as a ruthless enemy. In recognition of the brave defence, he permitted the garrison to come out with all the honours of war, taking with them a single gun, but delivering everything else up to their victors, and giving their parole as prisoners of war. The consent of the Indian chiefs was asked for and obtained, and these terms having been arranged, at mid-day on August 9 in that memorable year of 1757 the whole garrison left their fortification with a number of women and children who had suffered the terrors of the siege.

Then happened the most awful tragedy in the history of North America. The Indian tribes had searched the fort for booty, and, finding but little to satisfy their greed, were filled with a wild passion for revenge and blood and scalps. It is said, even, that many of the French-Canadians—men who, after a life of hunting in the wild backwoods, were little better than savages themselves—shared this sudden surging up of brutal passion. They at any rate did little to calm the excitement of the redskins, who begun to handle their tomahawks in a threatening fashion, while low, beast-like growlings rumbled through the dense masses of painted and befeathered braves.

Then, before the French officers and troops were aware of what was coming, thousands of tomahawks were whistling in the air, and with wild whoops the Indians swept down upon the defenceless, unarmed English. They were battered down with the Indian hatchets, and their scalps torn bleeding from their heads. Women were horribly murdered and mutilated.

Little children were dashed to pieces against the trunks of trees. It was a devilish orgy of savagery in its most ferocious and horrible form. The sickening details of it may not be described in print.

Montcalm and his officers, in a state of frenzy, threw themselves into the pandemonium of demons, and, sword in hand, strove to check the slaughter, cursing, beseeching, weeping, wild with indignation and shame. Many of the French officers were wounded by their own allies during the scene of carnage and confusion, and when at last the Indians desisted, it is estimated that 100 men, women, and children lay dead, while six times that number had been taken prisoners by the Indians, who refused to part with them without heavy ransom.

Nothing can exonerate Montcalm and his officers from the blame of this tragedy, although they had failed in presence of mind and not in any lack of humanity. It seems incredible that the French troops should not have been called upon to rescue their helpless prisoners by firing upon the scoundrelly redskins, or by keeping them at the bayonet-point. But above all, a deathless shame belongs to the Canadians, who to all accounts looked on approvingly while the butchery went on.

It was only with the utmost difficulty, and at a heavy cost, that Montcalm was able to redeem the prisoners from the hands of their savage captors. But the tragedy cost more to the French than this.

In every fight that followed the rallying cry of the English was 'Remember Fort William Henry!' and many a French soldier received no quarter, many a strong position was taken by storm, when that watchword of revenge was shouted hoarsely from English throats.

CHAPTER XVII

WILLIAM PITT AND ENGLAND'S AWAKENING

For some months there was a lull in the great campaign. The Canadian peasant farmers who formed part of Montcalm's army, had to return to their lands to attend to the crops, the food-supplies of the country being dangerously scarce.

In Quebec, at this time, the corruption of the Canadian Government had reached a greater pitch of villainy than ever before. The Intendant, or Minister of Finance, was an unscrupulous knave named Bigot, whose one aim in life was to amass a big fortune at the expense of his King and the Canadian people. Millions were sent out from France to supply the sinews of war, but the soldiers were ragged and half-starved, while the Intendant and his rascally officials gorged themselves with the plunder.

The great fur trade, which formed the means of livelihood of about two-thirds of the Canadians, was of little profit to the trappers, who risked their lives to obtain the valuable coats of the wild animals in the mountains and woods, as they received the smallest prices for their furs from the Government agents, who made fabulous profits for themselves when exporting them to Europe. The grain of the small farmer was bought up at a price fixed by law, and retailed again at famine prices. Even the food-supplies sent out for the relief of the people by the French Ministers were seized by Bigot and his gang, who sold them instead of distributing them, and put the proceeds in their own pockets.

Another great danger to the future of the French in Canada was the jealousy between the Governor de Vaudreuil and the Marquis de Montcalm. De Vaudreuil was a petty-minded, ignoble man, with a tremendous opinion of his own dignity, importance, and genius, and he not only hampered the move-

ments of the gallant General who was the one man of spotless honour and unselfish patriotism, in high command, but sent home spiteful and malicious reports to the French King and his Ministers.

In England, which for many years had been governed by statesmen of mediocre abilities and narrow aims, a man of genius had now come into power who awoke the nation from its lethargy, and inspired it with a new enthusiasm and ardour. After the overthrow of the old Duke of Newcastle, one of the feeblest and most incapable noblemen who had ever guided the helm of State, the great William Pitt, afterwards Earl of Chatham, became Prime Minister, and at once his strong hand and dominating intellect, his far-reaching ambitions for the extension of British supremacy, his extraordinary knowledge of the right man for the right job, and his hatred of gilded inefficiency and social favouritism, sent a new pulsation of life and energy through the whole nation.

He grasped the importance of that struggle in the Far West which had an empire as the prize of victory, as none of his predecessors had ever done, and he so inspired the English people with his own ideals that they were ready to put forth their utmost efforts for their fulfilment.

Not for many a long year had the British Army had such confidence in their Minister of War, nor had the youth of the nation, from the highest ranks of society to the humblest class, been so eager to serve under the flag. When Pitt began to make his preparations to send out such an army as never before had crossed the seas from England, the young bloods who had been grumbling and flirting and fooling in the coffee-houses and drawing-rooms of London remembered their manhood, and, throwing down their dice and their cards, begged for the opportunity of proving their mettle at the service of their country.

William Pitt, however, selected his officers without regard for their social standing and rank, as had been too much the custom with previous Ministers of War. The Earl of Loudon,

who, it will be remembered, had been sent out as chief in command of the army in America, had shown himself utterly incapable, and had achieved nothing but failure. Pitt superseded him by General Amherst as Commander-in-Chief of the new army, with a young man named James Wolfe as a Colonel of Brigade.

There were many curious people who protested loudly against the appointment of the last-named officer, who was not of high birth, and had never shone in society, either by wit or wealth—qualifications then considered necessary for distinction in the army. Some of his enemies sent to the King and informed him that Wolfe was not only incompetent, but more or less mad.

‘Mad?’ said George, who seems to have had some knowledge of the young man’s record, and still more knowledge of the utter lack of military genius among too many of his officers. ‘Mad is he?’ he growled. ‘Then I hope he’ll bite some of my Generals.’

It is not William Pitt’s least claim to the gratitude of the English people that he should have had the instinct to recognise the genius of the young officer who was the cause of such heart-burnings, and that he should have had the courage to give him the appointment in the face of class snobbishness and envy.

James Wolfe was not much to look at. Few people, indeed, would have suspected that this frail, eccentric man had the qualities of heroism and the genius of one of the world’s great soldiers. With his lank red hair done up into a stiff peruke, his delicate face, with prominent upturned nose and receding chin, each cheek touched with a spot of hectic colour, and with a lack of that elegance and grace which was then considered the correct thing for a gentleman, he seemed a comical figure, no doubt, to the Beau Brummel or the Lydia Languish of King George’s Court.

Yet those who had served with him and knew his record were more inclined to look beyond the mere outward appear-

ance of James Wolfe into the sterling stuff of the inner man. Young though he was, being only thirty-one when he was singled out by Pitt to command a brigade under General Amherst, he had a long experience of soldiering. As a boy of fifteen he had received an ensign's commission in the Foot, and the following year, as adjutant of his regiment, he had fought with conspicuous gallantry in the famous action at Dettingen, the last battle in which an English King (George II.) had commanded in person: The following year he was promoted to a captaincy, and in the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745-1746 he fought against the Scottish rebels, taking part in the battles of Falkirk and Culloden. Then a year or two later he was serving in the Low Countries, receiving the public thanks of the Duke of Cumberland for his bravery and distinguished achievements.

Then for about eight years he was on garrison duty in Scotland and England, eating his heart out at this inaction, and writing long letters to his beautiful mother, which have been preserved, and give the clearest insight of the ambition, the fiery enthusiasm, the burning patriotism, which inspired his soul and consumed his frail body.

Once again, in 1757, he was called out on active service, taking part in the attack on the French arsenal at Rochefort. This was a disaster to the English and a disgrace to nearly all concerned in it, but Wolfe alone was exempt from blame, and it was recognised that if his advice had been taken the result would have been very different. It was this episode which first brought him to the notice of Pitt, who was much impressed by the superior ability he had shown among so many older but less capable officers. Such, then, was Colonel James Wolfe, who now held such a distinguished command in the new forces for the American War.

The fleet which was to convey the English regiments across the Atlantic was under the command of Admiral Boscawen, an old sea-dog, who affords one more example of Pitt's knowledge of the right man in the right place. 'Old Dreadnought' his

sailors called him, and his rough-and-ready manners, his lion-hearted courage, his hot temper, and strict discipline, earned him the whole-hearted admiration, if not the love, of his Jack Tars.

Pitt's plan of campaign for the new chapter in the war was divided into two aims. Amherst and Wolfe with Boscawen's fleet were to attack the great arsenals of Louisbourg in Cape Breton, which formed the stronghold of the French in North America. At the same time General Abercrombie, already commanding the forces at the front, with a gallant young nobleman named Lord Howe as second in command, was to advance to the French fort at Ticonderoga, which was Montcalm's chief military base for his campaign on the frontier of New England.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE HEROES OF LOUISBOURG

It was on June 2, 1758, when Admiral Boscawen, with twenty-three ships of the line and seven frigates, carrying 1,200 men, including some Highland corps, which for the first time in our history brought the glint of the tartans, the skirl of the bagpipes, to the side of British soldiers, instead of against them in deadly enmity. It was Pitt whose genius had converted Scottish rebels into gallant and loyal regiments.

The situation of Louisbourg has already been described in previous pages. It stood isolated on the gloomy shore of Cape Breton, guarding, in seeming impregnability, the gateway to the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the highway to Quebec, the capital city of Canada. Since the days when it had been besieged and captured by William Pepperell, and then restored to France by a weak British Government, it had been steadily strengthened in its fortifications and armed with heavy batteries, while during the recent months Montcalm, perfectly aware that it would be the first object of attack by

Pitt's new army, poured into it a garrison of 3,000 troops—veterans who had taken part in many a European victory—under a gallant and sagacious officer, the Chevalier de Drucour.

In addition to the fighting force there were about 4,000 civilians, engaged for the most part in supplying the wants of the soldiers, and engaged in the ceaseless work of strengthening the ramparts and defences. In the harbour there rode at anchor twelve great battleships, carrying 3,000 men and 500 guns; so that it might well seem an impossible feat for any British army to succeed in an assault upon the fortress.

However, Amherst and Wolfe and Boscawen were three men to whom the word 'impossible' did not convey any meaning. When the British squadron reached their destination, it was wisely determined not to attempt to force a passage through the French battleships guarding the entrance to the harbour, but the troops were landed in small boats on the landward side of the stronghold—that is to say, on the shore of Sabarus Bay. They were faced by a long range of heavy batteries, which raked the redcoats with deadly volleys as they swarmed through the surf and gained a foothold on the swampy shore. Wolfe led the advance, armed only with a slight cane. He had been fearfully sea-sick during the voyage, but with that extraordinary mastery of will over the frailty of his body which he invariably exercised at the moment of action, he now seemed inspired with the energy and fire of ten ordinary mortals, and his high spirits and reckless courage in the teeth of the murderous cannonade from the French defences infected his men with wild enthusiasm and valour. Although their losses were severe, their onrush swept the enemy from their defences. Battery after battery was silenced by the English guns and captured at the bayonet-point. Then Amherst's cannon were mounted on the earthworks thus wrenched from the French, and turned upon the batteries guarding the entrance to the harbour. So terrific was the fire poured into them by the English gunners by day and night, and so steadily

did the sappers and engineers work their trenches towards the ramparts of the fortress, that, in spite of repeated sorties and the answering thunder of their cannon, the outworks were at last deserted by their defenders, who fell back behind the ramparts of Louisbourg.

Drucour began to fear a bombardment from the harbour as well as from the land side, and he took the desperate measure of sinking four of his biggest ships in the passage of the bay to bar the entrance of the English squadron, which had now silenced the island battery formerly defending the harbour gateway. But Admiral Boscawen, 'Old Dreadnought,' was not going to stand idle and leave all the glory of the siege to the red-coats. With well-directed shot and shell he blew up or burned every French battleship save one that rode at anchor in that death-trap of land-locked water. The exception to the general fate of those doomed warships, which resembled the destruction of the Russian fleet at Port Arthur during the late Russo-Japanese War, was due to a gallant exploit of some English sailors who made their way into the harbour under a hail of shot from the guns of the fortress city, and, cutting out one of the French ships, towed it in triumph as a prize to Boscawen.

During the progress of this historic siege an interchange of courtesies took place between the French and English officers, which proved that chivalry was not yet dead, and that war does not always destroy the more amiable sentiments of humanity. General Amherst ordered his gunners to spare the houses of the town as much as possible, and Drucour, the French commander, with the true politeness and kindness of his nation, sent a messenger, under a flag of truce, to say that he had a very skilful surgeon in the fortress, whose services were at the disposal of any wounded English officers. General Amherst, expressing his thanks for this generosity, was at great pains to convey messages and bulletins from his wounded prisoners, and to Madame Drucour he sent a basket of pine-apples, 'with many regrets for the discomforts he was causing

her.' That good lady, appreciating the graceful gift, now returned the compliment by presenting the English General with some bottles of choice wine.

Nevertheless, in spite of these amenities, the work of war went on grimly enough. The ramparts of Louisbourg were shattered by our guns, the batteries broken and silenced, and half the French garrison was killed or wounded. Drucour had done his best heroically, but he was beaten. To save further bloodshed, useless in the face of his inevitable capture, he at last accepted the demand for surrender, and all the survivors of his garrison became prisoners of war, and were taken to England as the triumphal evidence of that great victory.

Not only was Louisbourg captured, but, with the fall of this stronghold, the whole of Cape Breton passed into the hands of the English, with the adjoining island of St. John in the gulf, which is now known to us as Prince Edward Island.

For many months our soldiers were busy with the work of destruction. Ramparts were laid low, entrenchments were filled in, houses and batteries and earthworks were demolished; not one stone was left upon another in what had been the strongest fortress—save Quebec itself—in the French Empire of the West. Louisbourg was no more, 'but,' says a recent historian* of Canada, 'the vast line of the earthworks are still to be traced, covered with a mantle of green turf, and the bells of pasturing sheep tinkle softly over the tomb of the great fortress.'

Wolfe returned to England to report the victory to William Pitt. He had been the life and soul of the siege, for although General Amherst was a brave and trustworthy soldier, he had none of the genius and dash of his young Colonel of Brigade, who when he got home was not unjustly hailed by the English people as 'the hero of Louisbourg.'

This great triumph of our arms in Canada was not to be the

* Charles E. D. Roberts, 'A History of Canada.' Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, and Co.

first of one unbroken series of victories as Pitt and the nation fondly hoped. Montcalm and his army of veterans had still to be reckoned with.

While Drucour had been holding out desperately at Louisbourg, the French General had gathered his forces at Ticonderoga, on Lake George, which stood as a grim menace to the frontiers of the New England States. Here he awaited in confidence the advance of the English columns under General Abercrombie, who had been instructed to lay siege to the forest fortress, little understanding the strength of the position he was called upon to assault.

Montcalm had only 3,000, as against 15,000 men of Abercrombie, but his Lieutenants were the brilliant Bougainville and De Lévis, two officers worth a host in themselves, and he held a natural stronghold which defied attack. Encamped on a high, rocky ridge overlooking the lake, with a valley at its foot, and crowned with a stockade of fallen trees and stakes, whose ends had been sharpened and pointed like innumerable spear-heads, and with the sloping ground below strewn with brushwood and tree-trunks, Montcalm felt himself more secure than behind walls and earthworks.

In Abercrombie's army, however, there were no misgivings. He, a slow, irresolute, nervous man, did not inspire much confidence in his troops; but Pitt had given him as second in command a brilliant young officer, named Lord Howe, who had the same ardour and enthusiasm as Wolfe himself, and perhaps even more personal charm and magnetic qualities of leadership. From all accounts, he seems to have been a splendid type of English gentleman, scholarly, yet a born leader of men, gentle, and winning, and courteous in his manner, yet brave as a lion and decisive in command. 'The finest officer in the King's service,' was Wolfe's verdict of him. It was considered a loss greater even than the defeat itself when this promising young soldier fell, by almost the first shot, as he led the advance against Montcalm's defences of barbed trees. Such a charge, such desperate and heroic

valour, had seldom been recorded in the history of war. Those 15,000 men under Abercrombie forced their way over the stake-strewn ground, and hurled themselves time and time again at the wooden spear-heads on the crest of the ridge, as if unconscious of the deadly storm of shot which swept through them. The Highland regiments especially leapt into the very jaws of death that day. It has often been described how, in their flaming tartans, with flashing claymores and with shrill Celtic war-cries, they dashed at the impenetrable stockade, hanging on to the sharp stakes with dogged resolution, struggling, climbing, leaping through and over the piled trunks and branches, almost like wild animals robbed of their prey, yet absolutely in vain, unable to pass the ring of bullets which mowed them down like grass.

Abercrombie did not spare his men any more than they spared themselves. Again and again he sent his regiments up the heights, only to reap a fresh harvest of death. The French officers were almost tempted to hold their fire out of pity and admiration for such marvellous and futile courage. When that day came to an end, 1,950 dead and wounded men lay strewn among the sharpened branches or impaled upon the stakes. The French had lost 300 men, a comparatively small number, yet heavy enough to prove the grim heroism of English and Scots, who, in spite of such impregnable position, had not died without a blow.

Abercrombie retired to Fort William Henry, crushed in spirit and full of dark despair. He had lost the confidence of his troops, and it is probable he breathed a sigh of relief when he was relieved of his command by Pitt's instructions.

During that year of 1758 incessant fighting took place on the frontiers of Canada and at various isolated points round the chain of lakes and rivers running northward to Montreal and westward to Niagara. Forts were besieged and captured on either side, but on the whole the balance of success was in favour of the English.

Fort Frontenac, on Lake Ontario, was taken by Canadian

militia, and the tragedy of Braddock's defeat was avenged by the destruction of Fort Duquesne, in the neighbourhood of which a new fort was built named, after the great Minister, Pittsburg.

CHAPTER XIX

BEFORE QUEBEC

THE year 1759 opened with a new campaign which was destined to decide the fate of Canada. With the fall of Louisbourg the way was open to Quebec, and for many months William Pitt in England, with Wolfe at his right hand, had been preparing to strike a great blow at the heart of the French dominion in the West.

It was towards the end of June when a powerful English fleet under Admiral Saunders, carrying an army of 9,000 picked troops, under the command of James Wolfe, who had now been advanced to the rank of a Major-General, accompanied by three Generals of Brigade, named Monckton, Townshend, and Murray, sailed down the river St. Lawrence and anchored off the Isle of Orleans, four miles below Quebec.

It was a small force with which to attack the finest natural stronghold in the world, but Wolfe was satisfied with the quality of his men. 'If valour can make amends for want of numbers,' he wrote to Pitt, 'we shall succeed.'

The passage of the St. Lawrence had not been accomplished without difficulty and danger. The navigation was perilous for large vessels owing to the strong currents and the tortuous channel. French pilots were impressed, under pain of death, but their unwilling services were perhaps a source of greater danger, as there was some fear of their running the English battleships ashore, even at the risk of their own lives. However, a British tar rose to the occasion. 'Darn it!' he growled, 'I'll show you an Englishman can go where a Frenchman

daren't show his nose;' and he took his ship through in safety, and led the way for the English fleet.

'The enemy,' wrote the French Governor, astounded and alarmed by this exploit, 'have passed sixty ships of war where we dare not risk a vessel of 100 tons by night or day.'

Having disembarked his troops on the Isle of Orleans, Wolfe gazed across the water at the great rocks upon which the city of Quebec was perched, and studied with an anxious eye the dispositions of the enemy he was about to attack. Probably it was only then that he realized the stupendous task he was attempting.

Facing him, across the broad stream of the river St. Lawrence, was the Beauport shore, a long stretch of low-lying ground washed by a tide hiding the dangerous shoals which prevented any large vessels from coasting its banks. Here, from the river St. Charles to the Falls of Montmorenci, a distance of about thirty miles, a long line of earthworks had been raised, behind which the bulk of the French army lay entrenched. To the extreme right of the Beauport shore, with the Falls of Montmorenci on his flank, the French General De Lévis had established his headquarters, immediately facing the Isle of Orleans, where Wolfe had disembarked his troops. Ten miles to the left were the headquarters of Montcalm himself, and close to the citadel of Quebec was De Vaudreuil, the Governor, with his portion of the army. Then, as Wolfe's eyes travelled along this panorama, noting the long lines of troops behind the earthworks and the gun batteries dotted along the whole length of the Beauport shore, his gaze was arrested by the high cliffs four miles to his left, rising sharply above the river, where the city of Quebec was perched upon a great rocky eminence which served as a natural fortress. Behind the city itself the cliffs rose higher and steeper to form Cape Diamond. In the June sunshine the roofs and spires of the cathedral and churches, the white houses, the turrets of a château or hospital, the gables of a convent, stood out clear cut against the clear sky. But to Wolfe, no doubt, the wonderful

beauty and picturesqueness of the fortress city was not the object of his thoughts. His eyes were noting the innumerable cannon bristling upon the rocks and the snouts of those iron monsters ranged along the strand below, threatening destruction to any English ship that might venture up the channel.

Few Generals could have faced this fortress, so guarded by Nature as well as by warlike defences, with any hope of success. But James Wolfe was a man, not only of great daring, but of firm belief in the indomitable courage of his troops, and he felt with supreme confidence that if any human power could effect the capture of this stronghold the great exploit would be achieved by his officers and men.

It was not long before the crash of cannon signalled the opening of this heroic chapter of war, and it came in an unexpected and terrible form. Two nights after the English forces had taken up their position unchallenged upon the Isle of Orleans, the sentries pacing up and down the shore and the blue-jackets on the battleships at anchor in the broad bend of the river became aware, as they strained their eyes through the darkness, of black masses, darker even than the shadows of the night, looming silently across the water. Instantly the alarm was given. Bugles rang out through the English camp, and the bo'suns' whistles called all hands on deck of the English men-of-war.

To Wolfe, who was studying his charts with his general officers, the news was brought that the French fleet was coming down the river. Then suddenly the night was illumined with a tremendous flare of ruddy light, which leapt up from the moving masses on the stream, running with tongues of flame up the rigging, and belching forth fire from the hulks of great vessels which could now be clearly seen floating swiftly down the tide. At the same time as this lurid glare revealed them a terrific explosion resounded across the water, followed by repeated volleys, as if the guns of a great fleet were being fired in tremendous cannonade. Nearer and nearer came the leap-

ing flames, now melting into masses of roaring fire, seeming to threaten destruction to the English fleet.

It was not long before the meaning of this tremendous demonstration of floating fireworks was understood by Admiral Saunders and his sailors. The French had sent a squadron of fire-ships to burn and blow up the British men-of-war. As it was afterwards learnt, the scheme had been devised by Governor Vaudreuil. A number of ships had been daubed over with pitch and tar, filled with bombs and other explosives, and laden with rusty old cannon loaded with shot and iron. To an officer named Delouche, with a small body of French sailors, the perilous duty had been entrusted of leading those floating 'infernal machines,' under cover of darkness, close under the bows of the English fleet, and there to set fire to them, leaving them to work out their destruction.

Unfortunately for the well-laid schemes of De Vaudreuil, Delouche lost his nerve, and set fire to his vessels before they were in touch of the enemy's fleet. A French captain and half a dozen sailors were burnt alive before they could escape in the boats, and many of the fire-ships ran ashore before they reached a British vessel. Scared at first as our Jack Tars must have been by the approach of the fire-monsters, they soon showed their pluck, and, putting off from their battleships in small boats, with grappling-irons, rowed to the very sides of the burning vessels, and, towing them to shore, watched them from a safe distance. It was a risky game, but our tough sailor-men enjoyed it. They roared with laughter as each fire-ship was towed off, and jeered triumphantly as they toppled over on the swampy shore, with their guns popping harmlessly into mid-air.

Through the night air of that Canadian river, full-flavoured jokes and comical oaths in the choicest lingo of Wapping and Limehouse, rang from boat to boat. 'Ave ye ever taken 'ell in tow afore, my 'earties?' shouted one old salt, and his words were considered an excellent description of the scene, and have been duly recorded in history.

After this failure of the French, Wolfe decided to occupy a spit of land across the water to the left of the Isle of Orleans, called Point Levi. This was immediately opposite the city of Quebec, but was only defended by a force of about 1,000 Canadian riflemen and a band of Indians without artillery, as the French Generals had been under the impression that the English guns would not have a long enough range from this spot to do any damage to the city. That impression was soon shown to be a bad blunder. The Grenadiers and Highlanders stormed the position with a loss of only thirty men, and General Monckton then proceeded to erect his gun batteries, from which he sent shell after shell into the lower town of Quebec, doing infinite damage to the houses.

Having discovered their mistake, the French endeavoured to retrieve it, and 1,500 Canadians set out on a midnight expedition to retake the position. But in the darkness, and with a strong current that swept their boats below the English lines, they only succeeded in getting into a state of panic, which ended in their firing upon one another by mistake, and then making their way back again, to be received with the jibes of the garrison.

For some days Monckton continued his bombardment, but although distressing to the enemy, it was, after all, a poor game, because, although we might destroy all the houses in the lower town, it would be just as difficult to capture the city so long as the French army guarded the inaccessible rock upon which it was built.

CHAPTER XX

HEROIC FAILURE

SEEMING that his expenditure of shot and shell would not lead to any definite results, Wolfe decided upon a new move. This was to take a strong body of men under his own command across the St. Lawrence to the Falls of Montmorenci,

which formed the extreme boundary of the French entrenchment on the Beauport shore, where, as already said, the French General De Lévis had his headquarters.

Sending Monckton to make a sham attack higher up the river in order to disturb the attention of the enemy, Wolfe succeeded in getting 3,000 men across the river to the right of the falls. Between him and the French entrenchment was a deep, impassable gorge with a roaring cataract that made its way down to the St. Lawrence. Across this Wolfe hurled his shot into the enemy's lines, but without much effect. His purpose in taking up his position here had been mainly with the idea of some possible way round to the rear of the French position, but he found that to lead his army through the dense woods and over the steep heights lying to the back of Quebec would be a foolhardy adventure likely to result in irreparable disaster. To come to closer quarters with the enemy without attempting the madness of a frontal attack on the batteries lining the shores, it was necessary to ford the Montmorenci Falls shortly before they joined the sea, at which point a passage was possible at low tide.

Once again false attacks were made at various points along the Beauport shore, and when the French Generals were hurrying their forces up and down, puzzled at these movements, Wolfe, with the Grenadiers, Highlanders, and Royal Americans and other regiments, numbering 5,000 men in all, waited until the waning of the day, and then, in a number of small boats, rowed across the shallow ford and took possession of the wet sands on the other side of the Montmorenci. Above them rose abruptly a high ridge, upon which the French army lay entrenched. It is possible that Wolfe hoped to take the position by surprise, and it is possible, perhaps, that he might have done so but for an extraordinary and disastrous episode which now took place. Without waiting for the whole army to assemble in order on the strand, and for Wolfe to give the command for a general assault, the Grenadiers, a veteran regiment who ought to have known better, became

suddenly infected with a wild desire to get at close quarters with the enemy. With a tremendous cheer, they rushed towards one of the batteries beneath the steep bank of the river, and captured it at the bayonet-point from the French gunners. Then, disregarding the fierce protests of their officers, who, after vainly endeavouring to stop this irregular attack, were forced to accompany their men, they made a dash for the ridge upon which the French guns were stationed, and where 3,000 riflemen held their fire until the word of command. When that word rang out a flash of fire ran along the line of the ridge, and a deadly storm of shot swept through the ranks of the Grenadiers. In the face of 100 cannon, and beneath the sputtering hail from thousands of rifles, the British red-coats fought their way up the slope, shouting exultantly, though a heap of dead strewn their track. The black clouds above them now burst into torrents of rain, and the roar of thunder echoed the din of the guns. So blinding was the downpour that the assailants and the enemy were hidden from each other, and many of the Grenadiers, losing their foothold, rolled down the slippery height. At last the mad fever of these soldiers passed, and they came back in sullen shame, leaving their dead and wounded comrades to the mercy of the Indian scalping-knives. This horror, however, was averted by the 78th Highlanders, who brought in the casualties in the teeth of the storm without further loss, owing to the generosity of the French, who held their fire.

It was a disastrous business. Nearly 450 men, of whom thirty-three were officers, lost their lives in that fatal assault, and Wolfe was forced to retire across the Montmorenci in the deepest dejection. As they embarked, the French-Canadians and Indian allies yelled derisively at the retreating army, but the British soldiers waved their hats, and dared them to come down and fight on level ground. The following morning, with cold, stern words Wolfe rebuked the Grenadiers for their impetuous, irregular, and unsoldierlike proceeding, but he generously exonerated all his officers from blame, and was

very careful to make this explanation when he sat down to write his sad despatch to Pitt.

Still, the brave young General would not lose heart, nor did the bombardment of Quebec from Point Levi cease day and night. Messages passed under flags of truce between the enemies—messages generally of triumphant irony on the part of the French and quiet confidence on the side of the English. 'You may destroy the town,' said a French officer to Wolfe, 'but you will never get inside it.' 'I will take Quebec,' replied our young General coolly, 'if I stay here until November.' It was then July, so he was not inclined to throw up the sponge too soon.

Having failed at the Falls of Montmorenci, his next move was to attempt a landing above instead of below the city of Quebec. The Admiral was ordered to take the fleet right up the river past the French batteries, and Brigadier Murray, with 1,200 troops in flat-bottomed boats, were told off to accompany the battleships. It was a perilous and daring voyage, for they had to run the gauntlet of the formidable French batteries on the shore. Fortunately, however, they succeeded in gaining the upper river without much damage, and Murray made valiant attempts to gain a foothold on the shore. Every time, however, he was repulsed by General Bougainville, who with ceaseless vigilance followed his boats to and fro along the strand, and kept him off with a force of 1,500 men.

A greater disaster than had yet taken place now threatened the British army, which learnt with dismay that General Wolfe lay seriously ill in a farmhouse at Montmorenci. For weeks he had been the life and soul of the siege, not sparing himself by day or night. He was continually shifting his position, so that one day he would be with Murray, surveying the entrenchments and batteries on Point Levi, another day across the water to the Isle of Orleans, and then back again to Montmorenci Falls—to and fro, to and fro, ceaselessly and indefatigably, animating both officers and men with his

presence. They had now learnt to know the value of the comical little figure, with red hair and tip-tilted nose, so feeble in body, so indomitable in courage. 'Don't talk to me of constitution,' he said once impatiently; 'it's spirit that carries a man through.' And on this principle he constrained his frail frame to the most strenuous exertions. Yet every man, however plucky his spirit, has his breaking-point, and the young General was now prostrated with fever. A gloom settled over the whole British army scattered along the shores of the St. Lawrence.

If Wolfe were to die, it must be good-bye to Quebec, because no man but he—so, at least, thought his soldiers, whatever might be the secret confidence of his officers in their own abilities—could find a way through the French defences. Fortunately, however, after some days, when Wolfe's life hung in the balance, and with it the fate of Canada, he gradually pulled round, and when once again he appeared, pale and shaky, among his men, 'to the inconceivable joy of the whole army,' wrote one of his officers, the beloved commander was reported out of danger.

CHAPTER XXI

THE GREAT ADVENTURE

WOLFE now summoned a new council of war, and prepared to make one more attempt to get his troops, by hook or by crook, on to the heights of Quebec. While searching the cliffs with his glass, he had noticed a narrow white path zigzagging and winding like a piece of tape up the precipice to the summit of the rocks some distance up the river above Quebec. It was impossible to tell by how strong a force this pathway was guarded by the French, but Wolfe was determined to try the hazard.

He moved all his men from the camp at Montmorenci

across the water to Point Levi and the Isle of Orleans, and for the next few days kept the enemy's attention fully occupied by assaults at various points along the Beauport shore. In the strain of these continual demonstrations Montcalm had no rest day or night, and did not have his boots or clothes off for a fortnight, for he was well aware that some desperate move was on foot. But while the batteries of Point Levi were thundering across the water, and Admiral Saunders was moving his fleet to and fro to harass the enemy with the roar of his guns, Wolfe himself, with 3,000 men, slipped away up the river to Cape Rouge, behind which lay Bougainville with his 1,500 men, who had so valiantly kept at bay the English troops in their previous attempts to force a landing.

Wolfe, although reported to be 'out of danger,' was still very ill, and he implored his doctor to 'patch him up sufficiently for the work in hand, and then nothing mattered.' On the night of September 12 he sent for his old friend and schoolfellow, John Jervis (afterwards Nelson's famous Admiral), who was commanding a sloop in the river, and in the cabin of the *Sutherland* the two men had a long and earnest conversation. At the end of it Wolfe, with deep emotion, took from his neck the miniature of a young lady named Kate Lowther, to whom he was engaged, and, remarking that he felt that he should meet his death in battle on the following day, asked Jervis as a favour to deliver the portrait to Miss Lowther, should his forebodings be true.

Wolfe then completed his plans for his last desperate attempt. His scheme was to send an advanced guard of about 200 men up the cliff path, where, if luck was on their side and the enemy's force on the summit was not too great, they might hold the position until the army below could follow. The 'Anse du Foulon,' or Fuller's Cove, as the rutting in the rocks was called—it is now known as Wolfe's Cove—led up to a broad plateau named the Heights of Abraham.

If a British army could once assemble on that high ground

before the army of Montcalm could be marched up from the Beauport lines, an advance on Quebec might be triumphantly accomplished.

That night Admiral Saunders drew up his fleet close to the Beauport shore, opposite the Isle of Orleans, and soon every gun and every musket on board the British vessels roared with shot and shell. The Marquis de Montcalm was thoroughly deceived. Nearly the whole of the French army was concentrated upon the Beauport shore, and, while our Admiral thundered defiance, the enemy gave little heed to the small British fleet which lay silently at anchor above Quebec.

As soon as Wolfe heard the roar of guns down the river he ordered the boats to be lowered from his own vessels, and the troops to embark in them as silently as possible. Not a light was shown, and the officers gave their instructions in low voices. In spite of the absolute darkness of a cloudy night, the troops quickly filled the boats, and soon were drifting down the tide. Each one knew that upon the issue of this night's adventure lay the success or failure of the long siege, and not a man among them but was thrilled with the tense excitement of that silent voyage between the gloomy cliffs, which was to end in battle of a desperate kind. Only the lapping of the water against the boats and the subdued conversation of the soldiers relieved the grim quietude that brooded over them, though from afar came the rumblings and distant thunder of bombardment.

Wolfe leant forward in his boat, peering through the gloom. At any moment they might be challenged by the French sentries on the shore batteries or by some French vessel guarding the highway of the channel. Presently—perhaps to relieve the intolerable strain of his excitement—the young general began to recite in a low voice the sweet, soothing verses of Gray's 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard.' His voice fell into a sad cadence as he came to the line, 'The paths of glory lead but to the grave.'

In his own heart he felt sure that this was his last night on earth, and at that moment no doubt such words must have stirred him deeply. Above the swish of the water against his boat his thin, clear voice flowed on, and his men listened with a kind of awe and wonderment at their General's spoken reverie.

'Gentlemen,' he said quietly, when the poem was finished, 'I would rather have written those lines than take Quebec.'

A strange revelation of the human heart! Daring soldier as he was, unflinching before the grim duties of war, he felt, perhaps, that peace, after all, is more desirable than the greatest triumphs of the battlefield; that a life of obscure and patient toil is the most perfect life, and that the man who produces a poem, to stir the hearts of thousands with its beauty and sweetness, is in many ways a greater benefactor to his race than he who founds an empire.

Presently through the darkness, as they moved slowly down the tide, a sharp voice rang out across the stream:

'Who goes there?'

It was the challenge of a French sentry. A thrill ran through the soldiers in the boats. Were they discovered? If so, their plan was already defeated.

A Highland officer, who spoke French perfectly, stood up in his boat and answered back by the word:

'France!'

'Of what regiment?' said the sentry.

'Of the Queen's,' replied the Highlander.

Then he explained that he was in charge of some provision boats passing down the river to the Beauport shore.

'Hush!' he said. 'Don't make a noise, or the English will be upon us.'

The sentry was satisfied, and the English boats passed on, while Wolfe must have breathed a sigh of relief at the danger so successfully averted.

Then they reached the little cove at the bottom of the narrow cutting up the rocks, and with the utmost quietness the troops landed on the strand beneath the bush-covered cliffs. Twenty-

four men volunteered to lead the way, and, while Wolfe and his little army waited in breathless eagerness below, they scrambled up the path, clinging to the shrubs, and at last leapt on to the summit. Here they perceived about twenty white tents, and it was evident that the French had not left the place unguarded. As it turned out afterwards, Captain de Vergon, who was in command of this outpost, was fast asleep in his tent, and his sentries, listening to the distant roar of guns, never dreamed that 3,000 men were at the bottom of the cliffs at their feet, and that twenty-four British soldiers were about to spring at their throats.

Wolfe and his troops, straining their ears on the strand, suddenly heard the sound of musket-shots and ringing cheers,—unmistakable British cheers. Guessing that the little band above had secured their foothold, the General gave the word of command, and, like 3,000 monkeys, the whole force clambered up the precipice, hanging on to the bushes when their feet slipped, clinging to sharp projections of rock, bruising and cutting themselves, but nevertheless gaining the summit without the loss of a man.

Their forerunners, it appeared, had captured Captain de Vergon as he leapt out of bed, and the small French guard had been seized without much resistance. But already the sound of firing had raised the alarm, and from the direction of Quebec, hidden behind a rising ridge beyond the flat meadow land, where the British army was now forming, there came the sounds of shouting and the shrill clamour of bugle-calls.

CHAPTER XXII

THE PRIZE OF VICTORY

MEANWHILE, what was happening at the French headquarters?

The gallant Marquis of Montcalm, on his black charger, had been anxiously watching the movements of the British fleet

under Admiral Saunders, without a suspicion of what was taking place on the Heights of Abraham. Suddenly, to his horror and amazement, he heard the rattle of rifle-shots and the answering boom of guns from the batteries above Quebec. Putting spurs to his horse, he rode at full speed to the city, and saw for himself that the red-coats and tartan kilts of a British army had been drawn up in battle array two miles away on the plateau.

In the greatest alarm, but with real rapidity of action, the French General ordered up his regiments from the Beauport lines, and besought De Vaudreuil, the French Governor, to turn out his garrison and hasten to attack the invaders. But with his usual fatal jealousy of Montcalm, De Vaudreuil refused to let his men leave the ramparts of the city, and goaded the General into impotent rage by refusing to realize the danger of the situation.

In time, however, Montcalm's own army poured into Quebec, and regiments of French veterans, followed by Canadian irregulars and bands of painted Indians, swarmed through the narrow streets of the old city and took up position on the ridge above the meadow where the British troops were waiting in ominous silence, and General Montcalm, on his black charger, rode up and down the lines, forming into battle array a force now numbering about 4,500 men, and then, rising in his stirrups, shouted out the command to advance.

Bands of Indian and Canadian sharpshooters had by this time taken shelter behind bushes and hillocks, and kept up an incessant fire of musketry upon the English lines, while some field-guns dragged up from Quebec thinned Wolfe's ranks with well-directed shot.

But the British army remained steady, holding their fire, and as the French forces surged forward, shooting as they came, they advanced a short way to meet them, still without an answering shot. Then they halted, and at short range, as Wolfe raised his cane, and his voice rang out a sharp command, with a deliberate aim they fired a steady volley. This

was repeated again, and a cloud of smoke hid the two forces from each other. When this rolled away the French ranks were seen to be shattered, and hundreds of dead and dying men lay upon the ground. Vainly Montcalm and his officers strove to rally them. Before they could recover their formation Wolfe gave the order to charge, and ran forward swiftly at the head of his Louisbourg volunteers, followed by the Grenadiers and Highlanders. The wild skirl of the bagpipes, the fierce yells of the Scotsmen, the triumphant shouts of the red-coats, made a deafening clamour as, with an irresistible onslaught, our men rushed upon the broken regiments of France.

Wolfe was wounded in the wrist as he ran, but without a pause he wrapped his handkerchief round it and ran on. Then a bullet hit him in the body, but he pressed on at the head of his men. Once more he was struck, this time in the chest, and he toppled to the ground. A young officer and a few soldiers picked him up and carried him to the rear while the charge still continued. Here he lay with his eyes closed in a dead faint. But, presently recovering consciousness, he heard the officer sending for a surgeon.

'There's no need,' he said feebly. 'It's all over with me.'

Again he shut his eyes, but opened them again when one of the soldiers shouted out:

'They run! see how they run!'

'Who run?' asked Wolfe, struggling to rise on his elbow.

'The enemy, sir,' answered the young officer. 'Egad, they give way everywhere!'

A look of joy passed over Wolfe's face. With an effort, he collected his fast-ebbing strength.

'Go, tell Colonel Burton,' he said, 'to march Webb's regiment to the Charles River, to cut off their retreat.' For a moment or two he lay back gasping. Then to the officer who bent over him he whispered, 'God be praised! I die in peace.'

With that his head fell back and he was dead.

Meanwhile the French were in full retreat. Poor Montcalm was swept with the tide of panic-stricken soldiers towards Quebec, shouting in vain, with despairing fury, to check the flight. Presently a bullet lodged in his body, and he huddled forward in his saddle with his arms drooping. Supported on either side, he was led in this way through the gates of Quebec, and the sight of their heroic General drooping with ghastly face over his black charger raised a wail of horror and pity among the citizens as he passed. At this tone of grief the gallant and kindly man raised himself, and a smile hovered about his lips.

‘It is nothing,’ he said. ‘Do not grieve on my account, good friends.’

Before he died, in the house of a surgeon to which he had been carried, he summoned up energy enough to write a letter to the English commander, begging him to protect the people. On the morning of September 14 he passed away, and was buried under the floor of a convent in a grave hollowed out by the explosion of an English shell.

Meanwhile Governor de Vaudreuil had abandoned Quebec, and with a large force, which still outnumbered the English, retreated up the St. Lawrence in a shameful state of panic. The defence of the city was left to an officer named Ramsay, who for some time succeeded in defying the assaults of the English under Townshend, who had succeeded poor Wolfe in chief command.

But the citizens of Quebec were terror-stricken at the prospect of their city being taken with all the horrors of assault, and they ran up the white flag. In grief and fury Ramsay hauled it down, and went on firing his guns. At last, however, finding he stood alone against the garrison and townsfolk, he was forced to capitulate.

Townshend, with a noble generosity which could not have been surpassed by Wolfe himself, allowed the garrison to march out with all the honours of war, and treated the people of Quebec as English citizens, with the complete protection of their lives and property.

Wolfe's victory—for to him remains the glory of achievement—was indeed triumphant and complete. Over the walls of the greatest natural fortress in the world and the capital of Canada there floated the flag of England where the lilies of France had so long waved in splendour. With Louisbourg and Quebec in English hands, France had already lost her Western Empire.

Hardly had the English taken possession of 'the jewel of New France' than they had, in their own turn, to defend the walls of Quebec against a siege. General de Lévis, who had been Montcalm's most brilliant officer, had not shared in the defeat; for some days before Wolfe had stormed the Heights of Abraham he had been compelled to take his troops from the Montmorenci camp to Montreal, where an English army was approaching under Amherst. Hearing of the fatal disaster to Montcalm, he gathered together a great body of Canadian volunteers and Indians, so that his army amounted in all to 8,000 men. Then, as soon as the spring thawed the ice-blocks in the St. Lawrence, he had hastened to Quebec with a burning desire to retake the city.

Murray and the English officer in command of the garrison had made friends with the citizens, who had sworn an oath of allegiance to the British flag; but although there was happily but little fear of internal treachery, the task of defending the city with a small army, spent with endless toil, fever-stricken, and half famished for want of supplies, was not an easy one. Fortunately, when De Lévis was doing serious damage with his siege-guns, an English fleet appeared down the St. Lawrence, and when the flag of the first ship fluttered to the mast-head, bringing the news of a rescue, the garrison went wild with joy.

De Lévis hurriedly fell back again on Montreal, where he was joined by De Vaudreuil, but his army frittered away owing to the wholesale desertion of his Canadian volunteers, who took advantage of the British proclamation offering peace and protection if they returned to their homesteads. Left with

there that the descendants of the English adventurers and colonists fought for independence and won it.

It is not easy to trace the causes which led the American people to revolt. The immediate cause was the imposition of taxes by the British Government without obtaining the consent of the colonists. This in itself was a violation of the old law of Magna Charta, which declared that no taxes should be raised without the consent of the Common Council of the Realm. As the American people had no representatives in the English Parliament, they were, therefore, taxed without such consent. On the other hand, it was quite just that they should have paid their share towards defending the Empire—some part, at least, of the cost of the armies and fleets which protected their colonies. The Stamp Act brought in by the English Prime Minister, Lord Grenville, which compelled the American people to write all their agreements and legal documents upon stamped paper sent out from England, for which they had to pay, was not in itself a great burden justifying civil war. It was, indeed, repealed when William Pitt and Edmund Burke gave their great eloquence in Parliament to the cause of conciliation. Pitt declared in emphatic terms that the colonists were right in resisting that Act, and Burke, who now first began to take part in the debates in Parliament, made his famous speech on conciliation with America, of which one passage may still be quoted—though all might profitably be quoted, if space allowed—as the noblest and truest ideal of Imperial union and liberty :

‘My hold of the colonies,’ he said, ‘is in the close affection which grows from common hands, from kindred blood, from similar privileges and protection. These are ties which, though light as air, are as strong as links of iron. Let the colonies always keep the idea of their civil rights associated with your Government; they will cling and grapple to you, and no force under heaven will be of power to take them from their allegiance. But let it be once understood that your Government may be one thing, and their privileges another, that these

two things may exist without any mutual relation—the cement is gone, the cohesion is lessened, and everything hastens to decay and dissolution.’

The new taxes afterwards placed upon tea, glass, and paper imported into the American colonies were not in themselves a great hardship to the people of New England and the Southern States, goading them through sheer necessity to rebel against the tyranny of their rulers, but, as Burke said, the American people began to understand that our Government might be one thing and their privileges another.

One must, however, go deeper down into the character of the Americans to understand the passionate indignation with which such attempts at taxation were received, and to realize why such trivial acts should have resulted in the bloodshed of a great civil war. The secret of the revolution lay in the history of the men who made it. They were the descendants of people who had left their country and exiled themselves in a new world, facing the hardships and dangers of a wild life for but one reason, and that—liberty. The right to worship God in their own way, the right to govern themselves as they thought best, were the two principles of life which they bequeathed to their descendants. No people in the world had more liberty than they. And therefore, for that very reason, no people were more jealous of their liberty. For more than a century they had had their own local Parliaments, and had a large share in the making of the laws under which they lived. In most of the States the Governors were the freely-chosen representatives of the people. In the others, where a Governor was appointed by the Crown, there was, as we have already seen, no friendliness towards these strangers, who on their side were wholly out of sympathy with the people over whom they had been placed. With this spirit of liberty there had been growing another strong influence, now well enough known under the name of democracy, but then a somewhat new force in the history of the world. The American people had few of those old

feudal traditions which were, and still are, so strong in the mother-country. The reverence for kingship, the loyalty and subservience to a rich aristocracy, the well-defined limits between class and class, were almost unknown in the New World, where knowledge, courage, skill, in forest, farm, or town brought the best man to the top, and gave him the highest place among his fellow-citizens or backwood neighbours. Gradually, also, these colonists had learnt the lessons of independence and their own strength. In the war with France many of them had learnt that the uniform does not make the soldier, and that the man in fustian who shoots straight and stands his ground may be a match for the veterans of famous regiments.

In the constant fights with Indians in the backwoods many others had learnt the difficult art of forest warfare, and had tried their pluck, endurance, and strategy time and time again. Finally, as their trade had grown and prospered, their cities increased in size, and the separate States grown closer together by quicker and easier means of communication, as well as by the discussion and settlement of common interests, a certain feeling of nationality had begun to bind together the colonists, who had hitherto considered their interests as separate and distinct. This sense of power and union at the back of a proud and jealous regard for liberty and self-government was what animated the colonists to resist any attempts on the part of the English Government to tax their trade. Vaguely, perhaps, yet as an influence to action, it was this feeling which prompted certain citizens of Boston to board a British vessel in the harbour disguised as Indians, and to hurl overboard the chests of tea upon which the obnoxious tax was laid.

Unfortunately for this country and the Empire, the great William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, after long and splendid service, was now an invalid, and could no longer guide the destinies of his nation. His place was taken by incapable Ministers like Lord Bute and Lord North and various royal favourites called 'the King's friends,' who pandered to the

pride of obstinacy of the Sovereign. The King himself had a real love for his country, and honestly desired to do his duty by it. But from his boyhood upwards he had been governed by one fixed idea. 'George, be a King,' his mother had said to him with earnest repetition, and when he came to the throne as George III. he resolved to 'be a King' at all costs by enforcing his own will upon the Government, instead of leaving the great affairs of State to statesmen of Pitt's quality and character. It was owing largely to the personal obstinacy of the monarch that when a congress of the various colonies of North America was called at Philadelphia, and formulated moderate and reasonable demands for the withdrawal of the objectionable taxes, these were flouted by the English Government, and the growing spirit of resentment in the colonies was dangerously inflamed.

CHAPTER XXIV

BROKEN BONDS

THE first shots in the Civil War which now broke out were fired in the year 1775. For some months it had been evident to General Gage, Lord Percy, and the British officers in command of the English garrisons of Massachusetts that trouble was in the wind, and that stores of ammunition were being secretly accumulated by the people. At Quarry Hill, near Boston, some of these stores had been seized by an English regiment sent by General Gage, who meanwhile took the precaution of fortifying Boston neck. Immediately a riot broke out in the cities of Boston and Cambridge, quelled only after some street-fighting and bloodshed. Then the people of Salem began to mount cannon at the foot of their bridge, and again General Gage sent 300 men under Colonel Leslie to stop the work. The English soldiers were received by excited crowds of townsmen, and across the bridge soldiers and

citizens gazed into each others' eyes, each hesitating to shed the first blood.

The leaders of the rebels, Joseph Hancock and Samuel Adams, working secretly to stir up the revolution, had taken up their headquarters at the little village of Lexington, and munitions of war were being stored at Concord, a few miles away. This news came to the ears of Lord Percy, the English commander at Boston, and, resolving to take the people by surprise, he made secret preparations to capture the leaders and their stores by a strong force of troops. A man-of-war was to bring a regiment of soldiers to Charlestown, who were then to march on the disaffected district, while other soldiers were to march from Boston. These movements of troops and boats were not unknown to the people of Lexington and Concord. One of them, named Paul Revere, a popular hero in American history, undertook to give the signal of alarm. On the night of April 18 the road from Charlestown to Lexington and Concord resounded with the hoofs of a galloping horse. From the doorways of roadside cottages and inns dark shadows sprang out, and the horseman, without stopping, shouted out 'The English are coming !' and rode on madly through the night.

As Colonel Smith advanced with the English force from Boston the next morning he heard the sound of signal-guns and the pealing of bells. Growing alarmed, he sent back to Boston for reinforcements, and sent forward a scouting party under Major Pitcairn. On Lexington Common this advanced guard found seventy men, armed with rifles, drawn up in line.

'Disperse, ye rebels—disperse !' shouted Major Pitcairn, riding towards them.

The answer was a few straggling shots, which wounded a couple of English soldiers.

'Fire !' shouted the officer, and a volley rang out from the front rank of his battalion.

This was repeated twice, and as the smoke was blown away by the April breeze, the Lexington men were seen running,

leaving behind them eight corpses and ten writhing men. Colonel Smith now joined his advanced guard, seriously disturbed at the news of this bloodshed. They then marched on to Concord, where they failed to find stores or cannon, but set fire to the court-house, as a sample of what would happen if the revolt continued. To their surprise, however, as they were about to pass over North Bridge to take possession of the town, they suddenly found themselves faced by a body of rustics, very like those who had assembled and fled on Lexington Common. With a cheer the soldiers rushed across the bridge, to sweep the 'rabble' at the bayonet-point. But the rustics did not show their heels. One of them sprang forward, crying 'Fire, fellow-soldiers!' and a well-directed volley met the swarm of English red-coats, killing two of them and wounding many others. Each side retreated. They had not yet grown used to civil war. British officers and soldiers, in spite of their casualties, were still contemptuous of rustic rebels. But war had not been openly declared, and Colonel Smith did not want a massacre of peasants on his hands. He decided to return to Lexington, when he found the rebels had disappeared. Little did he guess what was in store for him along that road through the woods. As his men tramped along in the noonday heat, laughing and joking at the recent brush with the rebels, there came a crackling of shots from the trees on either side of them. It was no regular volley, but each shot went home and did its deadly work. Those men behind the trees were unrivalled marksmen, and not once pressed a trigger without covering a soldier with his barrel. Officers and men dropped every minute. Vainly little parties of them rushed into the woods to drive off the sharpshooters. Entangled in the undergrowth, they became still easier victims to the Concord men, accustomed all their life to the methods of Indian fighting.

There was nothing to do but to press forward along the dusty road with broken ranks and falling men. Only the valiant efforts of the officers prevented a panic, and at last,

having run the gauntlet of a spattering fire for two miles, the exhausted troops reached Lexington Common—'with their tongues out like dogs after a chase,' says one of them—to find safety in the hollow square of Lord Percy's brigade, which had now come up from Boston.

The same scene was repeated when Lord Percy and his 1,800 men continued the retreat to Boston. 'The Americans seemed to drop from the clouds,' wrote a British officer. From all the neighbouring villages and farms the rustics gathered on the flanks of the little army, stinging like gad-flies with their scattered shots. In that harassing march the British lost 247 killed and wounded. Serious figures indeed, with no pitched battle to record! If this was the temper of the people, their action could no longer be called a 'disaffection.' It was a revolution.

CHAPTER XXV

THE MEN OF BUNKER'S HILL

THE stern fact that a revolution had broken out was brought home quickly to the British officers in America, but less quickly to the public in the mother-country, by the events that followed. It will be remembered that at the northern end of the Hudson River, the great highway of the West, stood the fort of Ticonderoga, captured in the French war at the cost of many good lives. Its position was immensely important to the English in the event of civil war in America, and it was then decided by the leader of the revolutionary movement to take it by surprise before its garrison could be reinforced. Word was sent to the frontiersmen, and on the night of May 9, about 150 daring fellows, under the leadership of a man named Ethan Allen, crept silently through the darkness to the entrance of the fort. Raising the war-whoop, they dashed through the gates and overpowered the sentries. The garrison was com-

pletely unprepared for attack, and resistance was useless. Thus at one blow this stronghold of the west, with 200 cannon, fell into the hands of the rebels.

Meanwhile the men of Massachusetts were continuing the work they had begun at Lexington and Concord. Sixteen thousand armed men advanced on Boston and laid siege to the town where General Gage and his army were garrisoned. Behind Charlestown, on the other side of the Charles River, was a ridge of rising ground, called Bunker's Hill, and the insurgents, with a military instinct greatly to the credit of men untrained in the art of war, quickly realised the importance of seizing this height.

One night 1,000 men, under the command of a Massachusetts gentleman, named Prescott, marched stealthily up this slope, and got to work with spades to raise earthworks on the summit. So quietly was this done that the British sentries pacing up and down on the other side of the stream, and the sailors on the men-of-war in the river below, heard no sound of the digging, no click of the spades, and now and again through the long night came the 'All's well' of the watch as the officers went their rounds. But as the dawn came and the dark shadows of the night retreated before the rising sun, there stood revealed to the astonished eyes of the sailors on the British ships entrenchments 6 feet high, that had sprung up on the hill as if by magic. Amazed at this evidence of the insurgents' energy, the captain of the sloop in the river opened fire without waiting for instructions, and the booming of his guns brought the people of Boston and the British officers rushing down to the quayside to see what had happened.

General Gage instantly called a council of officers, and it was decided to drive the rebels from their earthworks without delay, as they were a distinct menace to the safety of Boston and the army contained in it. General Howe, the brother of that Lord Howe who had died so gallantly at Ticonderoga in the old French war, was given the command of the troops, who by noon that day were carried in boats across the

Charles River, to face the formidable entrenchments on the hill.

Meanwhile the earthworks were already being pounded by the British men-of-war, but without sustaining much damage. At first the Massachusetts men, unused to facing cannon-shot, were considerably scared, and began to repent of their rashness, but Colonel Prescott, their leader, with cool unconcern, mounted the parapet and marched to and fro with long, steady strides, facing the fire with unflinching eyes, and encouraging his men to finish their spade-work while there was still time. This gave them confidence at once, and they soon learnt to laugh at the flying cannon-balls, which hurtled over their heads or became buried in the hillside at their feet.

They waited eagerly for the British attack, listening silently when Prescott told them to hold their fire till he gave the word, and then let every shot tell. At last Howe led the charge up the hill, a gallant figure in white peruke, scarlet and gold uniform, and white silk stockings, waving his sword to the long lines of soldiers who came up steadily behind him with volleying cheers.

Not a sound came from the redoubt on the summit—not a shot or a shout. Had the rebels deserted their entrenchments? The answer came when the British soldiers were well within rifle-range. Prescott stood up and gave the order to fire. A sheet of flame flashed along the line of the earthworks, and a hail of lead mowed down the ranks of soldiers like grass. Howe rallied his men after their first panic-stricken retreat, and again advanced up the hill, to be met again with another deadly fire. His officers were picked off with ghastly accuracy; the men all around him fell and splashed his socks with their red blood. It seemed as if he himself were purposely spared by the men behind the mound, perhaps for the sake of that dead brother who had been so beloved.

Again the British retreated, and then for the first time began to understand the fighting quality of the men they had called 'rustics' and 'rabble.' The running fight from Lexington

had been a severe lesson, but then they had fought in the Indian fashion, behind cover. This was a very different thing, for the farmers in fustian had faced the finest troops of the world without flinching and in a fixed position.

Unfortunately for Prescott and his gallant rebels, they had spent nearly all their ammunition in defending this hill against the two advances, and now, when Howe collected his men once more, and with stubborn resolution they came up again with ringing cheers, they could only meet the attack with a thin and failing fire or with clubbed musket and bayonet-point. Even then the Americans made a good fight, and retreated in an orderly manner without panic, Prescott himself staying to the last, and giving the last blow with his sword-blade.

Bunker's Hill was an English victory, but not one to boast about. The glory was with those who had been defeated. The losses on both sides were severe, but whereas the Americans had about 420 killed and wounded out of a total force of 1,500 men, the English had lost no less than 157 officers alone, killed and wounded, and nearly 1,000 men out of 3,000 all told.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE SIEGE OF BOSTON

THE news of this battle caused the deepest consternation in England, where the serious condition of affairs in the colonies had never till then been fully recognised. In America it gave a new spirit to the revolutionary movement, for it proved beyond a doubt that men of field and farm and forest land could, if well led and well armed, hold their own against regular troops of British breed.

A messenger riding from Bunker's Hill to Philadelphia with the news of victory encountered a tall gentleman on a white horse, and shouted out that there had been a battle. The gentleman reined in his horse.

'Did the militia fight?' he asked anxiously.

'Yes,' said the man, 'and without flinching.'

'Then the liberties of the country are safe,' said the other, and rode on.

The gentleman who put that question, and was so much relieved at the answer, was General George Washington, who had just been commissioned by the Congress at Philadelphia to take command of the American army. It is not the first time we have met that tall, stately figure with the stern, handsome face and the cold gray eyes. We met him as a young man forcing his way through trackless forests to demand the surrender of a French fort in the name of King George of England, and we saw him again struggling bravely in the thick of that ghastly massacre on the road to Fort Duquesne, where all he could do was to rescue poor Braddock from Indian scalp-hunters and get the remnants of the army across the river. Once more we heard of him as the one strong man who faced the horde of redskins swooping along the line of the western frontier, eager for white men's blood and white women's locks. He it was who held the frontier forts against all odds until the English army came to the rescue; and if any man deserved the gratitude of the New England people it was the young Virginian.

That gratitude was not denied him. When the Congress of the American colonies met at Boston to consider the relations with Great Britain there were many men among the representatives of the various States who were observed with interest and admiration. There was Benjamin Franklin, 'the grand old man' of the American people, lover of liberty, true-hearted patriot, wily old diplomatist; who had represented the best interests of the American colonists in the Courts of France and England. There were Patrick Henry and Samuel Adams, who had long stirred the imagination of the Americans for liberty and independence by the eloquence of their words and writings. There were Peyton Randolph and Richard Henry Lee, both representatives of great Virginian families. But

none of these worthies was received by the people of Philadelphia with such acclaim as the tall, thin figure with the calm, strong face, who was pointed out to them as George Washington.

Said Patrick Henry, summing up the qualities of the men who were called to that Congress, which was to decide the destiny of the American people: 'Washington is undoubtedly the greatest of them all.' And, as history shows us, these words were true in their prediction.

As soon as he received his commission from Congress as General of the 'American Continental Army in the Field,' as it was called with some grandiloquence, though as yet it consisted of a miscellaneous crowd of armed farmers and militia, Washington rode hard to Cambridge Common, outside Boston, where the men were assembled. There, facing them, he drew his sword—a fine, soldierly figure as he stood alone in front of a little group of officers—and a burst of cheering, long and tumultuous, proved the readiness of the American revolutionists to follow him to victory or to death. Among the officers who were associated with him in his great adventure were Horatio Gates, as Adjutant-General; Artemus Ward, Philip Schuyler, Israel Putnam, and Charles Lee, as Major-Generals; Montgomery, Sullivan, and Nathanael Green, as Brigadier-Generals—men who will always live in history as the fighting leaders of the American Revolution.

Washington's first task was to organize the mixed and undisciplined forces of volunteers of Massachusetts into something like an effective and coherent army, and to equip them with the munitions of war. It was not an easy task. Congress had empowered him to raise a force of 25,000 men, but they gave him very little practical assistance either in the way of arms or money. They were still loth to cut the last feeble links binding them to the British Government, and while there was a remote chance of their terms being granted by King George and his Ministers, they not only hesitated to declare boldly for independence, but made no effort to obtain

supplies of war. The situation in America at this time was indeed a paradox. While Congress was expressing its loyalty to the Crown they were commissioning Generals to take command of the popular insurrection; and while American citizens were fighting and besieging British soldiers, there was still a pretence that peace had not been broken.

To Washington these temporizing measures were nothing but folly. He knew that when he drew his sword on Cambridge Common he had but one object before him—the absolute independence of the American people. It filled him with anger and indignation that his urgent letters to Congress for arms, ammunition, and men completely failed to stir up any practical energy in that assembly.

He found, too, that the first enthusiasm of his men at Lexington, Concord, and Boston was not to be relied on for persistent effort. The army under his command was almost hopelessly unstable. The men fought when they wanted to, and went home again when they felt inclined. The farmers and the married men were always slinking off to attend to their crops or to see their wives and children. 'They come,' he wrote of the militia, 'you cannot tell when, and act you cannot tell where, consume your provisions, waste your stores, and leave you at last at a critical moment.'

However, Washington was not the man to sit down in despair, and in a wonderfully short time, by strict discipline and sharp, stern ways with malingerers and defaulters, as well as by a personal enthusiasm and energy, which inspired the best of his men with zeal and absolute confidence in his leadership, he shaped order out of disorder, and fashioned his little army into an effective and powerful weapon.

His great need was artillery and ammunition, and these he obtained after long and weary waiting in the entrenchments round Boston, where he still kept a British army at bay, by the arrival of the cannon captured at Ticonderoga. They had come over the frozen snow-fields from the north on sledges, escorted by Henry Knox, the messenger who had

been sent by Washington to the captured fort. It was a godsend to the American General and his men, tired of the inaction during the dreary months of winter. Without delay Washington moved his men on to the heights above Boston, and mounted the guns, which startled the beleaguered army with their sudden and unexpected thunder. The shot fell thick over Boston City, and it became evident to General Howe and his officers that their position was untenable. Washington advanced his works nearer and nearer to the town, and at last Howe recognised the inevitable, and gave the word for immediate evacuation.

In disorder, and with sullen spirits, 11,000 British soldiers went on board the fleet in the harbour, taking with them 1,000 citizens of Boston who remained loyal to the English flag, and after lingering in the channel, while Washington marched his men into the town, they sailed off to Halifax.

It was a great triumph to the revolutionists, a great tragedy for British prestige. With an army of untrained men, with constant desertions in his ranks, with months of inaction owing to lack of guns, Washington had kept a powerful army hemmed in by his entrenchments, and by skilful generalship had so dominated their position that they could only avoid capture by retreating oversea. His pride at this performance was more than pardonable. 'To maintain,' he said, 'a fort within musket-shot of the enemy for six months together without powder, and at the same time to disband one army and recruit another within that distance of twenty odd British regiments, is more, probably, than was ever attempted.'

With this encouragement the revolution now spread rapidly. One of the most daring exploits of the insurgents was when Arnold and Montgomery, two of Washington's Brigadiers, set off with about two columns of 1,000 men in each to assault the strongholds of Canada. Montgomery, passing up the lakes, captured Montreal, and Arnold marched through the forests of Maine towards Quebec. The desperate valour of Arnold and his men on that winter journey through dark,

trackless forests and down wild, swollen streams, suffering intensely from hunger, cold, and the fatigue of endless marching, with the cries of drowning men and the groans of starved, frost-bitten men echoing in their ears, remains one of the most thrilling and romantic chapters of American history.

Montgomery and Arnold joined each other on Point Levi, where Wolfe and the British army had thrown up their batteries during the historical siege of Quebec in the old French War. With 1,300 men these daring adventurers prepared to attack the heights of Cape Diamond. Fortunately for the fate of the British Empire our loyal Canadians were not taken by surprise, and repulsed the attack. Montgomery was slain, and Arnold had to beat a hurried retreat. Canada was safe, for never again during the American Revolution did the enemy cross the borders. Arnold returned southwards to take part in other daring raids, and so be one of Washington's most trusted officers, until, at one of the darkest hours of the revolution from the American point of view, this bold, ruthless, unprincipled man turned traitor, and sold himself with almost incredible baseness to the English.

CHAPTER XXVII

A VICTORIOUS RETREAT

FIGHTING, meanwhile, was taking place in many different parts of the colonies. Towns were captured and burnt by British fleets, not only in the northern, but in the southern, colonies, where the mass of the people had been most loyal to the old country. This was a fatal error on our part, as it aroused the active hostility of Americans who at least would have remained neutral in the war. Worse still, the British Government were tempted to enlist the aid of Indian tribes against the revolutionists, and the very thought of beginning a new era of frontier massacre and the horrors of Indian raids

was enough to change the loyalty of many colonists into hatred and loathing. All this had the effect of stiffening the backs of the American people, and Congress, now abandoning all hopes of settlement, save by the sword, drew up its famous Declaration of Independence. This was the work of John Jefferson, one of the most eloquent and patriotic members of the Congress. In strong, tense words, glowing with the fire of conviction, he proclaimed the divine right of the American people to the liberty of self-government, free from the domination of any King placed upon a throne by accident of birth, free to work out their own destiny as a separate nation.

On July 5, 1776, a date ever memorable as the birthday of a new nation, this historic document was read out to the troops of the American army, and was applauded with unbounded enthusiasm. In New York a great concourse of citizens surged that night round the equestrian statue of George III., and with a spontaneous outburst of democratic passion, the emblem of British sovereignty was hurled to the ground. Its lead was afterwards melted into bullets, to be used by the revolutionary army against the soldiers of the King.

There was no doubt now as to the meaning of the revolution. It was no longer to be regarded as the disorderly violence of rebellious citizens against their lawful rulers. Even to the obstinate mind of King George, it was clear that the British army in America was face to face with a foe more formidable even than France had been in Canada. In a sudden panic the British Government exerted its utmost efforts to send out reinforcements, and, not relying only on its own soldiers, sent out emissaries to European Courts to buy the help of foreign troops to crush the revolting colonies. Several of the German States responded to the appeal, and agreed for a good price to act as the allies of the English in America.

Meanwhile, with these new battalions of British and German troops already on their way across the Atlantic, General Washington withdrew his army from Boston and

marched to the defence of New York, which he knew would be the first object of attack. With enormous difficulty he had kept together an army of 17,000 men, but of these some 7,000 were down with sickness, and the others were ill-armed and undisciplined. Nevertheless, Washington hastened to throw up defensive works on Brooklyn heights which commanded the city, and sent a strong body of troops, under General Green, to Long Island, guarding the entrance to the harbour. When August came, Washington found himself faced with overwhelming odds. Sir William Howe, with an army of 31,000 men, and backed by a powerful fleet with heavy cannon and ample ammunition, threatened the Americans on Long Island with destruction. Green, the most skilful officer in Washington's service, was down with fever, and his command had been taken over by a subordinate and less capable leader named Sullivan. On August 27, the British men-of-war opened fire on the American defences, and a powerful body of English and Hessian troops succeeded in landing on Long Island, and after desperate fighting completely hemmed in Sullivan and his men on all sides. The Americans made a gallant stand, but they were outnumbered by four to one, and swept by a cross-fire. When nearly 1,000 men had been killed and wounded, the remaining 1,077 were forced to surrender.

Washington, who had witnessed the defeat with intense anguish, soon found his own army at Brooklyn threatened by the British fleet trying to get round his position at the rear, while Howe's army was preparing for a tremendous assault upon his front. It seemed as if the Americans were doomed. But that night, with a stroke of genius, Washington defeated the British plan by embarking all his men in small boats and carrying them across the channel to New York. It was a retreat more masterly in its successful achievement than many a victory, for it was no easy thing to embark 9,000 men within gunshot of an army, and under the shadow of a large fleet, and to carry them across a strong tide without raising the alarm.

For several months now Washington had to retire steadily before an overwhelming force. He could not afford to risk the capture of his whole army by allowing the enemy to surround him, and so he was forced to evacuate New York and to retreat from fort to fort along the line of the Hudson River. Nevertheless, retreat though he must, he kept his men well in hand, and never allowed them to get demoralized. Half starving as they were, ragged and shoeless, with magnificent spirit he kept up their courage and inspired them with something of his indomitable will. Not only this, but no less than three times did he turn his retreat into attack, and with admirable daring fell swiftly upon the advance columns of the British Army, under Lord Cornwallis, dealing them staggering blows at Trenton and Princeton, which broke several British regiments and inflicted heavy damage on an army outnumbering his own by six to one.

CHAPTER XXVIII

BURGOYNE'S SURRENDER

THE attack on Trenton was one of the most dramatic and daring episodes of the Revolutionary war. At this place, on the other side of the Delaware River, Cornwallis had posted a garrison of 1,200 Hessian soldiers, under an officer named Colonel Rahl, and although it formed the wing of an army 30,000 strong, Washington resolved to carry it by a swift and sudden march. It was in the dead of winter; the ground was deep in snow, and the rivers blocked with floating ice. But on Christmas night, with 2,400 desperate and daring men, half frozen and half starved, with ragged clothes and ill-shod feet, Washington set out on his perilous adventure. As the men marched a heavy snow-storm beat in their faces, and their track over the hard white ground was marked with bloody footprints. In the dead silence and darkness of the night they embarked in small boats and forced their way

across the river through the drifting icebergs. On the other side of the Delaware the men formed up into two columns, the vanguard led by Sullivan. Presently word was brought to Washington that the muskets of Sullivan's men had got wet and would not fire.

'Tell your General,' said Washington, 'to use the bayonet, for the town must be taken.'

So they pressed on rapidly to the little town of Trenton, where 1,200 German soldiers, unconscious of an approaching enemy, had been carousing late after jovial Christmas feasts and revels. They were aroused from heavy slumber by the sound of cheering. Colonel Rahl, their commandant, rushed out of bed half dressed, and the drums of the garrison beat out the alarm, calling the men to arms. Surprised though they were, they made a desperate defence, but Washington had surrounded them, and held every road by which they could retreat. The game was up, and after thirty German soldiers had been killed, 918, with all cannon and munitions of war, surrendered unconditionally. Two hundred only escaped in the confusion of the capture, and Washington, with a loss of two killed and six wounded, had achieved one of the most gallant feats in the history of the war.

Cornwallis and Howe, although amazed by a retirement which could gain victories out of defeat itself, pressed forward with their large army, eager to get to close quarters with Washington's main body, and to gain possession of Philadelphia before it could be held by the retreating army. They came up with Washington at the river Brandywine, where he awaited them with the determination to make a stand and risk a battle. Owing to faulty information of his enemies' movements, and the bad generalship of one of his Brigadiers, Washington was badly beaten, and lost nearly 2,000 men. Nevertheless, in spite of this disaster the great General drew off his broken army in good order, and showed such a fighting front that Cornwallis and Howe found it prudent to fall back on Philadelphia and throw up defences round that city. Once

again Washington had wrested victory out of defeat, for the British army was harmless enough at Philadelphia, and Washington, entrenching himself at the Valley Forge—whence he could easily strike at them if they came out—held them practically in a state of siege.

Defeated time and time again, yet always rallying and striking back hard blows, he had gained one of the great objects of his campaign: he had kept the northern forces of the British army from striking southward and joining the troops then operating in the southern colonies; he had kept open the line of the Hudson River, which, in the hands of the English, would have broken the back of the revolution; and he had kept together an army now thoroughly disciplined and hardened by constant fighting.

In the meantime a new campaign had been organized on a large scale by the British. A force of 8,000 men, half English and half German, with about 500 Indian braves, were assembled at New York, with instructions to make a second attempt to capture the line of the Hudson River.

This fine army was put under the command of a new British General, from whom King George and the Government hoped great things. Sir John Burgoyne was the officer selected for the pleasant task of sweeping the rebels from the face of the earth, and he was quite confident in his own powers to do the job. A handsome, gallant, good-natured gentleman, with all the accomplishments of the town, but with very little experience of the field of war, perhaps his greatest merits were his undeniable courage and the genial manners which made him beloved by officers and men. The plan entrusted to him was to advance northwards along the valley of the Hudson, while an army under Sir John Clinton was to come down from Canada to meet him half-way, and a force of 1,000 men under Colonel St. Leger was to come along the Mohawk River from the west to the rendezvous of armies. It was a well-schemed plan of campaign, but it did not work out successfully, as was expected.

St. Leger was first to go to wreck in the west, and after being severely damaged by the sturdy defence of several little forts along the Mohawk, he had to beat a disorderly retreat northwards into Canada. In the meantime Sir John Clinton's Canadians had been held in check by Arnold—who had not yet turned traitor—and could not come down to join Sir John Burgoyne. This General was not finding his way up the Hudson so quickly or so easily as he had fondly hoped. He had preceded his march by a proclamation to the American people, which had precisely the opposite effect to what he had intended. He had informed them that 'His Gracious Majesty King George III. had decided to employ his Indian subjects as active allies in the task of quelling the revolutionary forces'—that is to say, in plain terms, the scalping-knife was to be freely used against white men and women. Consequently every backwoodsman and settler, instead of remaining neutral, as they might have done, was called to arms to defend his family and his home.

As Burgoyne made his way through the forests he was followed by little bands of American sharpshooters, who hung upon his flanks, picking off his scouts, bringing down his officers, and harassing his march with a galling and deadly fire, with the cunning and skilfulness of men, who could keep themselves invisible behind tree-trunks and follow the trail of an army like human gad-flies.

From Massachusetts an American army, steadily increasing in numbers, under three Generals, named Gates, Schuyler, and Stark, were pressing hard upon Burgoyne's line of march, and at a place called Bennington brought him to bay and fought a pitched battle, which cost the British about 700 men, with nine guns and considerable baggage.

Sir John Burgoyne's triumphal march was changed into a hard retreat. Abandoning his sick and wounded, he fell back hurriedly to the town of Saratoga. But the Americans followed him closely, their columns approaching from different directions, and eventually forming a chain of armed posts round the British army. Then steadily they closed in,

capturing Burgoyne's provisions and boats, and pouring a cross-fire upon our panic-stricken men, who were caught like rats in a trap. At last Burgoyne bowed to the inevitable, and to escape annihilation agreed to surrender. On October 16, a broken and despairing man, he handed his sword to General Gates, and a British army of about 7,000 men became prisoners of war. In addition, forty-three guns and thousands of muskets fell into the hands of the Americans. Such a defeat was almost unparalleled in the history of British soldiers, and the surrender at Saratoga was the heaviest blow which England had suffered in her Colonial Empire.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE VALLEY FORGE

FROM this time onwards the tide of war turned in favour of the Americans, though at times they went through dark days in the southern states when the revolution seemed stamped out, only to break forth again under the influence of Washington's ceaseless energy. But they were now reinforced by powerful allies. Benjamin Franklin had gone as an envoy to Paris to seek an alliance with the French nation, the hereditary enemies of England. Cheery, straightforward, shrewd old man as he was, he produced a very favourable impression at the Court of Louis XVI., and with the object of striking a blow at Great Britain through her colonies, and seeking revenge for the loss of Canada, the French Government willingly listened to Franklin's proposals.

A gallant young nobleman named Lafayette volunteered to command a French army in America, and there was tremendous enthusiasm when he set off for the New World with some of the veteran regiments of France. Little though they knew it at the time, the young aristocrats who followed Lafayette with so much zeal for the cause of American liberty were helping

forward the new movement of democracy which was soon to sweep over their own country and bring their own heads to the basket of the guillotine. It was the example of the American people in throwing off their allegiance to the King which helped to arouse the spirit of liberty in France, and sowed the seeds which bore fruit in the bloody harvest of the French Revolution. When Louis XVI. allowed his soldiers to fight on the side of rebels, he was unconsciously agreeing to his own sentence of death.

Be that as it may, however, the help of Lafayette and his soldiers was immensely valuable to Washington, and in many of the subsequent battles the French troops fought with a gallantry which counted for much in the success of the American arms.

All this time Washington held the line of the Hudson River, and kept a strong British army in check under General Clinton, who had superseded General Howe at Philadelphia. There was nothing very dramatic or thrilling in that long and dreary investment. It is only a long tale of dogged holding on through frightful snow-storms and on ice-bound ground, with provisions so scarce that the men were always starving, and clothes so ragged and worn out that there was hardly a pair of boots to the whole army. Frost-bitten and scurvy-ridden, with 3,000 sick men in the camp hospitals, where medicine was as scarce as food, it is no wonder that desertions were frequent, that mutinies broke out, and that Washington's army dwindled month by month. Yet never once did he despair. Never did he cease to encourage his men with stirring appeals to their courage and patriotism. The Congress at Boston neglected his wants, neglected to pay his men, and listened to calumnies against his ability and generalship. More brilliant and showy feats of arms were being done down south and in the west, and they did not realize that it was Washington's stubborn endurance and seeming inaction which secured the northern colonies from British dominion, and prevented the strong army at Philadelphia from doing any work in the war. These

gentlemen of Congress were comfortable enough themselves, and did not give much thought or pity to the starving, shivering men on the heights of Valley Forge. They even dared to remonstrate with Washington for building huts for his men, considering that he should keep them in tents and attack the enemy instead of remaining always on guard. It needed some very plain words from Washington to bring them to their senses :

‘I can assure these gentlemen,’ he wrote, ‘that it is a much easier and less distressing thing to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room, by a good fireside, than to occupy a cold, bleak hill, and sleep under frost and snow, without clothes or blankets. However, although they seem to have little feelings for the naked and distressed soldiers, I feel superabundantly for them, and from my soul I pity their miseries, which it is neither in my power to relieve nor prevent.’

At last it dawned on the British army at Philadelphia that, as Benjamin Franklin said, ‘Philadelphia had taken them, and not they Philadelphia.’ Having grasped this self-evident fact, which they might have seen a year before, they summoned up a little energy, and one fine morning tried to give Washington the slip, and get northwards to New York. Washington rejoiced to find his enemy on the move, and followed hard on their heels. At the town of Monmouth the Americans were on their flank, and Washington sent General Lee with an advanced column to commence the attack. But Lee was either a traitor or a coward, and as soon as the British swung round upon him he retreated without a shot. This was more than Washington could stand with patience—almost more than he could believe. Putting spurs to his horse, he galloped furiously to the front, losing, for the first time in his career, his own self-control, overwhelmed by a passionate indignation. Perceiving the retreating General, he rode straight at him, and, with a furious oath, demanded an explanation of his conduct. Washington’s fiery wrath, his stinging, bitter words, abashed the timid officer, so that he had not a word to

answer. Sent to the rear, he was court-martialled and relieved of his command. Then Washington rallied the retreating men and brought up his main army, and assaulted the British position with such energy that, with a loss of 500 men, they retreated in hot haste to New York, where they remained in safety under the guns of a British fleet. Washington followed them again, and kept them inactive in New York as he had done at Philadelphia, until the time came when he could leave them to their own inglorious ease and strike southwards for a smashing blow at another and more important enemy.

CHAPTER XXX

THE FALL OF YORKTOWN

WHILE Washington had kept guard over the highway of the Hudson, there had been fierce fighting in the southern colonies of Virginia, Georgia, and the two Carolinas. The hero of this campaign on the American side was General Green, a man after Washington's own heart—daring, dogged, of quick imagination, of prompt and sudden action. Beaten often in pitched battle by the army under Lord Cornwallis, his defeats were like those of Washington in the retreat from New York. He kept his ragged regiments in hand, and rallied them after each repulse, keeping them close to the heels of the enemy, and striking swift, sharp blows whenever Cornwallis and his officers felt most secure. By bold, strategic movements, and with the cooperation of gallant Lafayette and his French troops, Green eventually succeeded in cutting the British army in twain and wedging himself between the two forces.

Cornwallis was forced to retreat northwards, and established himself at Yorktown, on Chesapeake Bay, losing men fast as he marched through a hostile country, in which every American was an active enemy, owing to the raids, pillagings, burnings, and outrages which had been the unfortunate policy of Corn-

wallis and his soldiers in this southern campaign. Lafayette followed him, and then at the right moment Washington himself saw the time was ripe to bring his own army south to join hands with his gallant allies. To do this he needed the command of the sea, and this was obtained by a French fleet, which out-manceuvred the British men-of-war under Rodney, and brought Washington's army in transports to the Chesapeake.

On September 26, 1781, the American troops landed at Williamsburg, and two days later marched upon Yorktown. Cornwallis was completely surrounded, and the Americans with their French allies soon got their guns to work upon the beleaguered town, while the French ships battered it from the bay. For three weeks the siege continued. The British army made a desperate defence, but their sallies were beaten back by the fierce onrush of the Americans and French, who captured redoubt after redoubt in spite of their own heavy losses in the hand-to-hand fighting. At last Cornwallis, with his fortifications shattered, his ammunition nearly exhausted, and his men exposed to a deadly fire on all sides, found himself compelled to surrender with his whole army.

It was on October 19 that this great humiliation to British arms was enacted with impressive ceremony. Poor Cornwallis was prostrate with grief, and kept to his tent, but General O'Hara, apologizing for his chief's absence, delivered his sword to the victor. Then the British troops, in full uniform, marched out as if on parade between the lines of the Americans and French, piled their arms, and became prisoners of war. As they stepped out steadily their bands played a tune then well known under the name of 'The World turned Upside Down,' and doubtless to those 10,000 British red-coats it represented their feelings at this wholesale surrender.

With the fall of Yorktown came the end of the revolutionary war. It was the real birthday of the Republic of the United States of America, and when the 'Stars and Stripes,' the new flag of a new nation, fluttered above the captured town it proclaimed the loss of the American colonies to the British Empire.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE PRICE OF PEACE

WITH heroism the American people had won their independence, but though no one may grudge them a whole-hearted admiration for their courage and determination, it may be permitted to those who still love, and live under, the Imperial flag to regret that those sons of our own race should have fought against their kith and kin and cut themselves out of that great union of nations which forms the British Empire.

Our own sympathies go out most of all to those people in the American colonies who throughout all this time of trouble and bloodshed remembered with splendid loyalty all the ties of blood and tradition which bound them to the mother-country. They had no sympathy for a revolution which was not caused by any tyranny justifying civil war, and thousands of them resolutely refused to take up arms against their King and kinsmen. Many of them, indeed, fought on the side of the English, and thousands remained neutral. It has been seen that in the early stages of the war Washington had great difficulty in keeping together an efficient army, and it cannot be doubted that this was due in some measure to the loyal Americans, who declined to fight in an unjust cause.

Later, when various successes had inflamed the martial passion of people whose fighting instincts are not governed by reason or justice, these 'United Empire Loyalists,' as they were called at a later date, were certainly in a minority, and therefore in a difficult and dangerous position. They were persecuted by the people among whom they lived, and many of them, unable or unwilling to hide their antagonism to the revolutionary movement, lost their fortunes, and in some cases their lives. At the end of the war numbers of these United Empire Loyalists refused to remain in a country which had broken away from the traditions of the race, and 40,000 at

least crossed the Canadian borders, and founded new homes in the forests of Ontario, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, which they quickly converted into pleasant provinces of farmland and villages.

At a later date, when war again broke out between Great Britain and the United States, the loyalty of these new-comers was proved to the hilt by the splendid bravery with which they fought by the side of the English and French-Canadians.

The American Congress put the peace negotiations into the hands of Benjamin Franklin and John Adams, and shrewdly and well did those two Republican statesmen drive their hard bargain with the British Government. Not one acre of land of the North American colonies was relinquished to the country which had first peopled them; and on September 3, 1783, when the treaty of peace was formally concluded, King George III., with a heavy heart, put his hand and seal to the famous document, of which the first article contained the following momentous words:

‘His Britannic Majesty acknowledges the said United States—viz., New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia—to be free, sovereign, and independent States; that he treats with them as such, and for himself and his heirs and successors, relinquishes all claims to the government, proprietary and territorial rights of the same, and every part thereof.’

On December 4 of that memorable year, in a tavern at Boston, a dramatic and moving little scene was enacted, which may be described as a fitting conclusion to this short sketch of the revolution.

The officers of the American army were assembled there to say farewell to the great General who had led them in many a hard-fought battle, who had shared their victories and their defeats, their hunger and hardships, who had been the inspiration and the guiding spirit of all their campaigns, and who,

now that his duty was done, was returning to his quiet home at Mount Vernon.

'Washington,' says one of the chroniclers of this historic war, 'as he rose and faced them, could not control his voice. He lifted a glass of wine, and said: "With a heart full of love and gratitude, I now take my leave of you, most devoutly wishing that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honourable." They drank in silence, and Washington said: "I cannot come to each of you and take my leave, but shall be obliged if you will come and take me by the hand." Up they came, one by one; and one by one Washington, his eyes filled with tears, embraced them and said farewell. From the tavern they followed him to the ferry, where he entered his barge. As the boat moved away he rose and lifted his hat. His officers returned his salute in silence, and all was over.'*

* 'The Story of the Revolution,' by Henry Cabot Lodge.

PART V

THE EMPIRE IN THE EAST

CHAPTER XXXII

THE STORY OF INDIA

IN the reign of Queen Elizabeth a company of merchants was formed in London for establishing trading settlements in India. By the middle of the seventeenth century the prosperity of the company was so far advanced that they had built forts and factories at Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta, and were rapidly acquiring wealth and power by the export of Indian spices and silks and other valuable commodities to Europe in exchange for articles of British and foreign manufactures. They were not without rivals in their enterprise. Both the French and Portuguese had also obtained settlements on the Indian coast, the headquarters of the former being at Pondicherry, of the latter at Goa and between the traders and officials of the three companies there was constant jealousy and keen commercial competition. For nearly a century, however, they had lived on friendly terms with the Indian Princes who had given them their grants of land and trading privileges, as well as with the native merchants, to whom their custom was a valuable source of wealth. As yet none of these Europeans had dreamed of conquest or great territorial expansion in India; and certainly, if anyone had prophesied that before a century had passed one of those trading companies would be the dominant power over nearly

the whole of that vast Empire, he would have been regarded as a jester or a madman.

Before the tale is told of how that fact was actually accomplished, it will be well to take a brief glance over the history of India and the character of its people.

The story is one of constant invasion, of continual warfare between great races of fighting-men, of new civilizations built upon the ruins of old dynasties, of new waves of religious faith sweeping over ancient creeds and doctrines, of magnificent cities and palaces built upon the crumbling foundations of ancient buildings, not less magnificent in their time. In the mountain districts of India there still exist tribes of people who are descended from the original inhabitants—small men, with low foreheads and broad cheek-bones, like the Tartars of China, from whom they are believed to have sprung long ages ago. These were thrust back into the mountain districts by a great invasion of Aryan warriors from Central Asia, the forefathers also of our European races, and very similar in their physical characteristics to the Europeans of to-day, with fair skins, high foreheads, straight noses, and small mouths. Settling in that part of India now known as the Punjab, through which runs the river Indus, or Hind, as it was called, they took the name of Hindus; their complexions darkened, their warlike instincts were softened, and they built up a high form of Eastern civilization and culture.

Speaking the Sanskrit language, now dead, but the parent of European speech, they were renowned for many great teachers, scholars, and poets, who developed the wonderful Hindu religion, which is still the abiding faith of many millions of Indian people. This faith is in its essence a Nature-worship, or the revelation of a Divine spirit in the elemental forces of Nature, such as fire, water, and air. They also believed in the doctrine of reincarnation, or the passing of the spirit after death into other earthly forms of animals or men of higher or lower degree, according to the goodness or wickedness of the life previously led. Thus the man who reached

the highest perfection of human life, after passing through many stages of human nature, would at last pass into the presence of the Almighty, and dwell for ever in the spirit of God. Corrupted by many curious and ignoble superstitions, this doctrine was also debased by a rigid social code known as caste. The people were divided into various ranks or castes, from which there was no escape or promotion except by death, when the merit of a good life would raise a man into a higher rank in his next life, according to the doctrine of reincarnation. The highest caste was that of the Brahmins, or priests. Below these were the castes of the soldier and trader. Then came the Sudra, or low-caste people, the peasants and slaves; while at the bottom rung of the social ladder were the Pariahs, or outcasts, having no caste whatever.

At the present day this social code has been split up into such innumerable divisions that among the Brahmins alone there are over 1,800 different castes; and so strictly is each one separated from another, that men and women of one caste may not marry with those of another, nor may they eat a morsel of food cooked by a member of a different caste, nor touch or be touched by even the hem of the garment of anyone of different caste, believing themselves defiled thereby.

The highway of Indian civilization, and the path down which succeeding invaders marched with their wild hordes of warriors, was along the valley of the Ganges—the great river which runs for 1,000 miles east and west through a hot plain fertilized by its beneficent waters. Here for thousands of years the patient Indian peasants have tilled their rice-fields and refreshed their cattle, and with earthenware pots or water-skins have nourished the rich soil from the sacred stream, which they call the Great Mother, believing that the Spirit of God has come down upon the water, so that it brings a blessing on the land. Here, also, for thousands of years great cities have been built up along the valley—Delhi, Agra, Lucknow, Cawnpore, Allahabad, Benares, Mirzapur, Patna,

Dacca, and Calcutta at its mouth—where succeeding dynasties have built their palaces and temples, the crumbling ruins of long ages past still testifying to their ancient splendour by the side of others, perfect and beautiful, belonging to a more recent date.

At Benares, 'the sacred city,' wonderful still for its crowded buildings, its yellow palaces and golden temples, its gilded domes, glittering pinnacles, and old houses of reddish-purple stone, Buddha, the great teacher, proclaimed a new faith which in parts of India superseded for a time the old Nature-worship of Brahminism, and is still the religion of the Burmese and other people. Its influence was destroyed, however, among the majority of the Hindu people by a revival of the old Brahminical faith under a King who arose in the sixth century A.D., whose influence was so great over his people and those whom he conquered that he induced them to renounce Buddhism and return to Hinduism. This is still the faith of the great mass of the Indian races, with the exception of those who belong to a new creed which, in the year 1001, was brought by a horde of warriors from Arabia. These men were Mohammedans, and under a great chief named Mahmud they conquered large territories in many parts of India, which in course of time became independent kingdoms, where the faith of Islam or Mohammedanism prevailed. Two hundred years later the north-western part of India was ravaged by wild tribes from Mongolia, in Central Asia, under a chief named Gengis Khan, and again, when 200 more years had passed, by the chieftain named Tamerlane, from the country of Tartary, which also belonged to the Mongols. He advanced along the valley of the Ganges, conquering everything in his triumphant and devastating march, and, taking possession of Delhi, proclaimed himself Emperor of India. From this man sprang the long line of Mogul Emperors who ruled over India for several centuries, and still reigned at Delhi when the English established their factories on the coast. At first they were men of powerful character who ruled with a strong sway

over the various races who were now settled in every part of the great continent.

To Akbar the Great, and to his descendants, Shah Jehan and Aurangzebe, India owes the glory of its most splendid palaces and temples. They were all great builders, and at Delhi, Allahabad, Benares, and other cities along the valley of the Ganges, their memory is perpetuated in the mosques and tombs and great palace fortresses upon which they lavished their wealth, and which they erected as a symbol of their grandeur. But gradually their wealth and luxury enervated the character of the Mogul Emperors, and the weak, vicious men who succeeded to the throne failed to keep a firm hold upon the turbulent races whom they were called upon to rule. Their subordinate Princes defied their authority, and became in fact, if not in name, sovereigns of independent States, who waged war with each other incessantly, and vied with each other in cruelty and oppression of the people in their dominions. The great Moguls, as the Emperors were called, became mere puppets in the hands of these turbulent Viceroys, and throughout the length and breadth of India there was a fierce and constant rivalry between State and State, a bitter and unceasing hatred between Mohammedans, Hindus, Mahrattas, and other native races, while assassination, treachery, intrigues, and murderous raids were common episodes in the history of the Indian Princes and people.

Such was the state of affairs in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries when the English, French, and Portuguese trading companies obtained grants of land on the coast. For a long time the Europeans did not trouble themselves about the political situation of India. Nabobs might murder their rivals, Viceroys might defy their Emperor, or devastate each other's territory; but as long as trade still flowed into the European factories, and their own safety was secure, the officials of these trading companies gave no concern to what was not their business.

But at last it was given to a Frenchman to see that the

rivalry between the native Princes might be made the means of obtaining a great power in India. Dupleix, the Governor of the French settlement at Pondicherry, with the inspiration of genius—or at any rate with the eyes of a shrewd and far-seeing man—realized three great facts. He saw, first, that the native armies of India fought without discipline or knowledge of the science of war; secondly, that as they were then they would be no match for European soldiers; and thirdly, that they might be trained to fight with European methods and weapons. Finally, he worked out the maxim that when two men fight for a throne it is good policy to appoint the one who has least right to it; for he will acknowledge that he owes his throne to those who assist him, whereas the rightful heir would be less grateful for securing what properly belonged to him.

The last theory was not a moral principle, but it showed a shrewd knowledge of human nature, and Dupleix resolved to put it into practice. An opportunity soon offered. The Viceroy of the Deccan, a great province of Southern India, died at this time, and a pretender named Muzaffir laid claim to the throne. Dupleix sent one of his most brilliant officers, named De Bussy, with a body of French troops to his support, and with triumphant success established the usurper in the place he had coveted. The French Company were paid an enormous treasure as the price of their support, and De Bussy remained as the chief adviser of the Prince. When this man was assassinated De Bussy nominated his successor, and French influence became even more paramount than before. Then it happened that the Nabob of the Carnatic and the great province adjoining the Deccan was killed, and here also a pretender, named Chunda Sahib, sprang up, and endeavoured to seize the throne. Again Dupleix offered the help of his troops, and exhibited the almost irresistible power of European soldiers over native armies. So rapidly and triumphantly did Dupleix prove the success of his theories, that French influence became for a time all-powerful in Southern India. The ambi-

tions of this clever Frenchman increased in proportion, and he was already cherishing the great vision of giving the Empire of the East to the French nation.

One thing alone troubled him—the presence of the English East India Company. While an Englishman remained in India he could not feel secure in his great purpose. He therefore decided to clear them out without delay, and advanced on Madras with the native regiments of Chunda Sahib, whose claims as Nabob of the Carnatic were opposed by the Company, and his own French troops. The city was but poorly garrisoned, and as yet the English had not tried their mettle as fighting men on Indian soil. Scared by the fear of all the horrors of a long siege, as well as overawed by the prestige of the French soldiers, the Company's officials surrendered without a show of resistance. It seemed as if the prosperity of 'the Honourable East India Company' were doomed to fall in favour of their French rivals.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE COMING OF CLIVE

DUPLEIX, who had struck this heavy blow, was a man of genius, and, as 'all things are possible to genius,' there does not seem much doubt that, but for one fact, this great and audacious man would have brought the whole of India, with all its prodigal wealth and ancient splendour, under the dominion of France. Of that one fact which was to upset his vastly ambitious schemes and cause his utter ruin Dupleix was at this time entirely ignorant. It was a fact, indeed, which would have seemed to him utterly insignificant, for who would have thought that the presence of a young and unknown man named Robert Clive, a junior writer in the service of 'John Company' (as the East India Company was called), was to decide the destiny of India from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas?

It is very doubtful even whether this young man's fellow-clerks and officials regarded him as possessing any special merits. They seemed to have looked upon him rather with some dislike, not without justice, as a silent, surly fellow, of harsh and irritable temper, subject to 'fits of the blues,' when life had no joys for him, and his companionship was decidedly depressing. He had not come to India with any reputation for ability. His father was openly of opinion that 'Bob was a booby.'

In his schooldays he had been truant and rebel, the ring-leader of the young ruffians of Market Drayton, in Shropshire, where he obtained a naughty notoriety by climbing one day to the top of the church steeple and dangling his legs over the gargoyles, to the great terror of the inhabitants.

His father was glad to get rid of the troublesome lad by buying the clerkship for him in the Madras factory of the East India Company, to which he was packed off, with the paternal blessing, at eighteen years of age.

To a young man of Clive's temperament and irritable, active brain, the drudgery of clerkship in the office at Madras must have been unbearable at times. No doubt the climate also was the origin of some of his moroseness and moodiness. The liver is answerable for many wicked deeds, and was perhaps the cause of an incident which nearly lost us an Empire. A companion, coming into his room one day, was asked to take up a pistol and fire it out of the window. At the sound of the report Clive sprang up and exclaimed :

'Well, I am reserved for something ! I have twice snapped that pistol at my own head !'

Another story of this period in his life illustrates his hot temper. He was playing at cards with a young ensign in the service of 'John Company' when he sprang up with an oath and accused the officer of cheating. A duel followed, for such an accusation could not be passed over. Clive fired and missed his man, upon which the officer walked up, and, holding his pistol to Clive's head, bade him ask for his life and promise to

pay his debt. Clive hesitated. Then, with his usual disregard of death, called out impatiently :

‘Fire, and be d——d ! I said you cheated ; I say so still, and I will never pay you.’

The astonished young officer, finding his threat ignored, flung away his pistol, and called him a madman.

When Clive’s friends commented on the affair, he said abruptly :

‘The man has given me my life, and though I will never pay him nor associate with him again, I have no right in future to mention his behaviour at the card-table.’

When Madras surrendered without a blow to the French, Clive was a prisoner of war. At once, as if some spell had been broken, all his moodiness and sluggishness disappeared in the face of the great peril threatening the English in India. The depressed and discontented clerk became changed in one hour to the man of action, and ambitions sprang up in the heart of the man who had vainly tried to take his own life. With a young friend named Maskelyne, afterwards his brother-in-law, Robert Clive disguised himself in native dress, and the two comrades kicked the dust of the surrendered city off their shoes, and made their way through the French and native lines without being detected. Then they hurried on across 100 miles of native territory to Fort St. David, where a small garrison of soldiers in the service of the East India Company, under a gallant officer named Major Stringer Lawrence, still kept the English flag flying. Here, limp and footsore, and worn out by the hardships of their long march, they received a warm welcome from the officers and men.

Clive was soon able to gratify his new ambitions as a man of action, and during three separate assaults made by the French and their allies against Fort St. David he showed so much coolness and courage that Major Lawrence rewarded him with an ensign’s commission. His daring and absolute disregard for death was so conspicuous that whenever any

particularly dangerous work was on hand Clive was the man entrusted with it.

It was he who led a forlorn hope against the town of Devicotta, and narrowly escaped death when, with 34 Europeans and 700 sepoys, he was suddenly charged by a great squadron of native cavalry. Twenty-six men were cut down at Clive's feet, and he himself was nearly sabred by a ferocious horseman. Devicotta was taken, however, by the main body of the British forces, and then Major Lawrence, with Clive at his right hand, advanced upon the French and their allies, who were encamped in the open country near Pondicherry. Here the English were joined by the native army of Nasir Jung, who was being supported by the East India Company as the rightful Subudar, or Viceroy, of the Deccan in opposition to his nephew, Muzaffir Jung, who was favoured by Dupleix. A great battle seemed inevitable, but during the night, when the rival armies faced each other, a quarrel took place between the French officers and the native Princes, and they returned with their men to Pondicherry.

Curiously enough, the same thing took place between the English and their allies. Nasir Jung refused to pay the price demanded by the officers of the East India Company for their support, and Major Lawrence, in disgust, left the native army to fight its own battles, and returned to Fort St. David. It was a bad bargain for Nasir Jung. He was soon afterwards attacked by Dupleix, and lost his life in the midst of a disastrous defeat. The French seized an enormous amount of treasure, and in return for appointing Muzaffir Jung as Viceroy of the Deccan, and confirming the position of Chunda Sahib as Nabob of the Carnatic, the French Company received a grant of £40,000 a year, and Dupleix himself was given a present of £10,000 a year, with the governorship of many lands and villages.

Dupleix's ambitions now seemed triumphantly realized. He had put his pretenders in power over two of the greatest provinces of India, and both of them knew so well that his

support was necessary to their existence that they were ready to grant all his demands, to heap their treasury at his feet, and to put their armies in motion to sweep the enemies of their master into the sea. On the spot where Nasir Jung had fallen the French Governor, knowing the influence of such memorials upon the native mind, laid the foundations of a town to be called Dupleix Futtehabad—the place of the victory of Dupleix—and he adopted all the display and magnificence of an Eastern potentate. Assuming native dress, he was resplendent in costly silks, and his turban glittered with precious stones. When he rode out upon his elephant, magnificently caparisoned, he was accompanied by a brilliant suite of European and native officers, and preceded by bannermen and trumpeters and other emblems of rank and power. At his durbars, or audiences, those who approached him with their presents, according to native custom, were compelled to go down on bended knee, and this mark of respect was not to be omitted even by the members of his own council.

But though indulging in this ostentatious display, Dupleix's restless mind was always busy with bold schemes, and while intriguing with native Princes, pitting them one against the other in a jealous rivalry of which he gained the advantage, he never lost sight of the necessity of clearing the English out of India.

In March of 1751 he sent his troops to advance upon Trichinopoly, which had been taken possession of by the English. Chunda Sahib himself with a large native army also advanced upon this town, and the East India Company was in dire peril. Clive and his fellow-officers, however, decided to strike a blow before the two armies approached, and set out to attack Madura, which was held by a small French garrison and a force of native soldiers. This expedition ended in disaster. A panic seized the English soldiers, and they retreated in disorder, abandoning guns and ammunition, unshamed by the jeers of their Indian allies. Clive and his officers vainly endeavoured to check this disgraceful flight,

but were forced back to Trichinopoly. Clive himself went soon afterwards to Fort St. David, disgusted with the behaviour of the troops, but his own gallantry had been so conspicuous that Major Lawrence promoted him to the rank of Captain.

Trichinopoly itself was now surrounded by the French troops and Chunda Sahib's native army, and the garrison was soon in desperate need of provisions. Once again Clive stood out among his fellows as a man of daring, and volunteered to pass men and stores into the beleagured town. Upon his return from this successful exploit he was attacked by a strong force, and seven out of his small escort of twelve sepoys were killed in the desperate flight to the shelter of Fort St. David. A second time he achieved this bold feat, entering Trichinopoly with a fresh convoy of stores after a hot fight with the French. He returned with a gloomy account of what was passing in the town. The native soldiers were losing confidence in the English officers, who spent their time quarrelling with each other. There was a woeful lack of energy or order in the defence, and there seemed every prospect that the town would fall into the hands of the enemy.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE DEFENCE OF ARCOT

ROBERT CLIVE, brooding over these things, saw with the true instinct of a 'heaven-born General,' as William Pitt afterwards called him, that the relief of Trichinopoly must be effected not from within, but without; that is to say, the besieging force must be drawn off by an attack upon some other place of importance. One place above all lent itself for this purpose, the city of Arcot, the capital of the Carnatic, and the favourite residence of Chunda Sahib, the usurping Nabob. This lay 100 miles from Fort St. David, and Clive's

great plan was to capture it in the absence of the Nabob by a swift and fierce attack. He unfolded his scheme to Mr. Saunders, a new governor of the Company recently arrived from England, and these daring proposals were accepted, with full confidence in the ability of their author to carry them into effect. To Mr. Saunders, indeed, a good deal of honour is due for the magnanimous way in which he gave Clive every man and gun he could possibly spare from the defences of his own town.

As it was, Clive had no very great force at his command when, on August 25, he set out from Madras—which had again come into the possession of the English owing to a temporary treaty of peace—on his adventure. It consisted of 200 Europeans and 300 sepoys, with eight guns. He had no sooner started than the Indian monsoon broke over his head with tempestuous fury. But Clive was not the man to be kept back by storm or flood. For five days he pressed on with his men, battered by torrents of rain, waist high in water over swampy ground, never once with a dry spot on their bodies, but with their ammunition carefully guarded in their leather pouches. 'Keep your spirits up and your powder dry,' was Clive's watchword, and his grim, determined face and unflagging energy filled even the native soldiers with enthusiasm and awe, so that to their superstitious minds he seemed a kind of God-inspired man. Chunda Sahib's native soldiers at Arcot, who had news of what seemed to them an almost miraculous march through the fury of the elements, were filled with dread and dismay, and before he reached the gates of Arcot they abandoned their fort without a shot, hiding in the palaces and hovels of the city. Clive thereupon entered in triumph, and immediately set to work to throw up new defences and strengthen the fortifications of the citadel. Then one night he sallied out, and falling upon the native soldiers of the Nabob, who had rallied their courage, and to the number of 3,000 men had assembled in a camp outside the city, he put their outposts to flight, and did

considerable damage to the disorderly army before he retired again to the fort.

By this time Chunda Sahib heard of the capture of his capital, and, burning with rage, he immediately despatched his son Raja Sahib with 4,000 men from the army around Trichinopoly to regain the city and punish the daring Englishmen with instant death. This, of course, was what Clive had hoped for and expected. The withdrawal of so large a force from Trichinopoly was the proof of his success. With cool courage, he prepared to sustain a long siege. The fort in which he was situated was by no means favourable for defence. It was built in the centre of the town, which was still in the hands of the enemy, and was more than a mile round the walls, which were in a state of great dilapidation. The brickwork was crumbling with age, the towers at each corner of the fort were in ruins, and the moat was dry in many places and choked with rubbish. Before long his garrison had been reduced by sickness and wounds to 120 Europeans and 200 Sepoys, and when Raja Sahib came upon the ground, gathering reinforcements upon his way, Clive was surrounded by an army of no less than 9,000 native soldiers and 150 Frenchmen, each of whom, perhaps, was worth in fighting value six of the Sepoys.

It will be seen, therefore, that Clive was in the midst of a danger which might have broken the nerve of a very brave man. But peril was the one thing which brought out all Clive's finest qualities. During these days all his moodiness and irritability dropped away from him, and he showed a constant cheerfulness, a splendid confidence, an indefatigable energy, which inspired his men, both Europeans and natives, with his own spirit. Food was scarce, and starvation threatened them, if the siege continued many weeks. But, with a wonderful self-denial and generosity, which has few parallels in history, his sepoy came to him of their own accord, and begged that the rice might be given to the English soldiers, who suffered so much from hunger, while they them-

selves would find sufficient nourishment from the water in which the grain was boiled. This heroism and devotion gave Clive renewed hopefulness and determination. Not a morning or an evening went by without his making the complete round of the fortifications, to see that each man was at his post, and frequently he fired with his own hand the charges of the guns, which continually roared defiance at the enemy. One of these guns was of native manufacture, a monstrous engine, which had been dragged by 1,000 oxen from a distant fort which had been built by a former Indian Prince. Clive had this mounted on an earthwork, and once every morning for four days it was fired at the Nabob's palace, where Raja Sahib sat with his council of officers. On the fourth day its prodigious explosion shattered it to pieces, fortunately without damage to the gunners.

But Clive was not content with firing his guns over the walls. He made several sallies against the enemy, and forced back the French soldiers to a more discreet distance, with a good many casualties to bemoan. So for no less than eleven weeks the siege continued, until the men were gaunt with hunger, ragged, and begrimed with powder and dirt, but still with high spirits. Nevertheless, when the fiftieth day was reached, and the store of provisions was almost exhausted, Clive saw that he must be starved out unless he could gain relief. It happened that, on the flanks of Raja Sahib's army, a tribe of wild Mahratta horsemen, under a chief named Morari Rao, was watching the progress of the siege, with increasing admiration for the courage of the defenders. Clive sent out messengers to this man, offering to pay him handsomely if he would come to his assistance; and his joy may be imagined when the Indian chieftain expressed his willingness to unsheath his sword in aid of so gallant a captain.

Raja Sahib's spies brought the news of these negotiations, and he realized that Arcot must be carried by assault before Morari Rao came to its rescue with his 6,000 warriors. The day fixed by the Nabob's son for this great attack was

November 14, a day upon which was kept a great Moham-medan festival, when the memory of the great prophet and the influence of the fiery spirit consumed on that feast-day, would inspire his soldiers with fanatical courage and ardour.

Maddened with intoxicating drink and religious fervour, Raja Sahib's troops rushed upon the walls of Arcot, driving before them a long line of elephants, with sharp spikes and iron plates fixed to their foreheads, to batter down the gates. Clive, worn out by fatigue, was fast asleep when the alarm sounded; but springing from his bed, he rallied his men, and ordered his gunners to spare no shot. As their volleys resounded above the hoarse shouts of the drunken soldiers, the elephants stampeded, and, turning tail, charged their drivers with lowered heads, trampling them under their huge feet, and spreading disorder and panic among the advancing ranks. Meanwhile, at another part of the fort a great raft, laden with soldiers, was making its way across the moat beneath the walls. Clive perceived the danger in the nick of time, and, taking his place at one of the guns, served it himself, and quickly cleared the wooden bridge of its living freight. Desperate assaults were taking place at various points of the walls where the moat was dry, but here also the attacks were repulsed, until, after an hour's tumultuous fighting, when 400 of the assailants lay dead, the enemy drew off in sullen silence. All that night Clive and his men awaited a renewal of the assault; but hour after hour passed, and no shout of battle rang out in warning. When morning came the enemy were no more to be seen, and the glittering array of the Mahratta tribesmen moved through the mists of dawn to do honour to the man who was to be famous henceforth as Sabat Jung (the 'daring in war'). Raja Sahib was in hurried retreat, and Clive was in absolute possession of the fort and city.

He followed up his triumph with unabated energy. Leaving a garrison to guard the town, he pursued the retreating army of Raja Sahib with 500 sepoys, 200 English, and 600 of his

new friends the Mahratta horsemen. Rajah Sahib still had a force of nearly 5,000 men, including 300 French, so that he outnumbered his pursuers by more than four to one. But Clive did not hesitate a moment when he came upon the heels of his enemy at a place called Arni. His own men were flushed with victory, and attacked with such irresistible onslaught that they broke up the army opposed to them and threw it into the utmost disorder. The Mahratta horsemen swept round their flanks, and charged into the panic-stricken masses, so that Rajah Sahib was driven from the field with the loss of all his guns.

Clive then returned to Fort St. David, where he was received as a conquering hero. But the laurels were not to rest quietly on his brows, for news soon came that Raja Sahib had gathered together his scattered forces, and, with large reinforcements, was devastating the country belonging to the East India Company around Fort St. George. Clive set out in hot pursuit, and, coming up with the enemy at a place called Kaveripak, gave battle in the moonlight. The fighting was desperate on both sides, but Clive managed to drive a wedge of men between the enemy's forces and to send his cavalry upon their flanks. They then became panic-stricken and took to flight, leaving a large number of prisoners and guns in the hands of the victors.

Upon Clive's return to Fort St. David he passed the monument which Dupleix had put up to his own glory. Somewhat ruthlessly the great rival of the French schemes of power in India blew the column to the ground, as a sign of the overthrow of French influence.

This done, he proceeded to Trichinopoly, which was again besieged by the French and their allies. Here, however, he was only second in command, as Major Stringer Lawrence had returned from furlough in England, and, being Clive's superior officer, asserted his right as Commander-in-Chief. It says a good deal for Clive's good sense and loyalty that, although he had secured such distinguished victories, he placed

himself without a murmur under the orders of his old friend and chief.

The French troops before Trichinopoly were under a General named Law, who had done much gallant fighting for Dupleix. But on this occasion he was completely outmanœuvred by Major Lawrence, who passed a number of his troops into the town after storming a height known as the Golden Rock, which his Grenadiers carried with magnificent dash and courage. Then General Law made the fatal mistake of withdrawing to an island in the river, where his communications were promptly cut off by Clive, who got round on the further bank. The selection of Clive, who, in spite of his great services, still held the rank of only a junior Captain, aroused much jealousy and strong remonstrance from the senior officers under Lawrence; but the question was settled by the Mahrattas, who declined to serve under any other leader.

One of the most dramatic and perilous incidents in Clive's career has now to be recorded. The French commander sent forward a force of 700 sepoys with eighty Europeans, of whom it is sad to say that forty were English deserters, to make a night attack upon Clive's camp at Samiaveram. The enemy reached the English outposts without being discovered, and when they were at last challenged by the sentries, the peril was still unsuspected when the answer of 'Friends!' was given by one of the dishonoured Englishmen among the attacking force. It was only when a volley was poured into the camp that the alarm was raised. Clive himself was in bed, sleeping soundly, but, awakened by the shots, one of which hit the couch on which he was lying, he sprang up and rushed out, plunging into the midst of the French sepoys, whom he took to be his own native soldiers. He began to rebuke them sternly for what he believed to be a disorderly brawl, when one of them slashed at him with a sabre. Clive closed with the man, and received only the blow of the hilt on his shoulder. Then, realizing his mistake, he managed to escape to his own men in the darkness, who by this time

were drawn up in fighting order. So absolute was the blackness of the night that it was impossible to tell the whereabouts of the enemy, but Clive brought up his guns and waited for the dawn. When at last daylight came it was seen that the French had taken possession of a pagoda, from which they tried to cut their way out, finding themselves in a death-trap, under fire of the English guns. Many of them were shot down in the attempt, and the survivors were obliged to fall back to the shelter of the building. Clive, faint with loss of blood from the flesh wound he had received early in the night, advanced, with the support of two sergeants, to demand their surrender, and leant against the porch inside the gate. As he stood there the officer of the English deserters came forward, and, answering Clive's demands with abusive language, deliberately took up his musket and fired it point-blank at Clive's head. The ball missed him, but passed clean through the two sergeants supporting him, both of whom fell mortally wounded. At this outrage Clive's soldiers rushed forward, and the French only saved their lives by an instant surrender. The sepoy outside the pagoda were not so fortunate, and in trying to escape they were cut down to a man by the Mahratta warriors, who were maddened by the treacherous attack on their great captain.

Soon after this episode, the French General Law, finding his supplies cut off and his natives deserting in increasing numbers, surrendered to Major Lawrence. The Nabob, Chunda Sahib, was also taken prisoner by a native Prince, the Rajah of Tanjore, who had been cooperating with the English. Unfortunately he became a victim of Oriental cruelty, being barbarously murdered by his captors.

During the next few months the fighting continued in scattered districts between the French and English and their respective allies, and owing to the illness of both Lawrence and Clive, Dupleix succeeded in winning back several of his lost positions. Eventually, however, Major Lawrence again defeated the enemy round Pondicherry, and Clive, on his

recovery, was sent to capture the French forts at Colivam and Chingleput. The force at his disposal was probably the worst ever led by an English captain. It consisted of some 200 English gaol-birds who had recently been sent to India, and 500 untrained sepoys. When they first smelt powder outside the fort at Colivam they instantly fled in panic, but Clive, with his wonderful genius for putting spirit into the most faint-hearted of men, rallied them and led them back to the front, where, by exposing his own person wherever the fire was hottest, he won their confidence and brought out all their manhood. The fort surrendered, and Clive then defeated a detachment advancing to its relief. That done, he marched on to the next fort, and with his gaol-birds, who had now turned heroes, captured it at the first onrush.

With these new laurels of victory Clive returned again to Fort St. David. But for a time he was worn out with fatigue, and his health showed serious signs of breaking up. He decided to return to England, and after marrying Miss Margaret Maskeleyne, the sister of the young friend with whom he had formerly escaped from Madras, he left India in February, 1753.

He was welcomed as a hero, and the directors of the East India Company acknowledged his great services by a banquet in his honour, giving him the title of General, and voting him a diamond-hilted sword as a token of their esteem. This last honour Clive, with fine magnanimity, refused to accept unless the same distinction were granted to his honoured and gallant chief, Major Stringer Lawrence.

During his absence in England fighting still continued in India in a desultory way. French and English forts were taken alternately, and alliances on each side were made with native Princes, who broke them with an easy conscience whenever it suited their purpose to do so. On the whole, French influence in India was steadily decreasing, while the power of the East India Company was in the ascendant. Then France herself, by an almost inconceivable stupidity, shattered all hopes of future empire by recalling Dupleix in disgrace. So

the man of genius who had brought Indian Princes to his feet, who made and unmade Nabobs and Subadars, who had organized native armies and conquered great provinces, went home to die in poverty and loneliness, and with a broken heart. What an utter lack of imagination must have existed at the Court of Louis XIV. ! No wonder they lost Canada and India, when such counsels could prevail.

For a time at least the English had nothing to fear from their French rivals, and when two years later France awoke with new ambitions in India, sending Count de Lally with reinforcements, it was too late to make headway against the power of their English enemies. For Clive did not stay in England ; he was soon back again to deal with a new situation which had arisen in India, and one which resulted in an almost imperial power for old ' John Company,' of which he was still a servant. His previous achievements had been in the South of India, in the Deccan and the Carnatic, but this time he found a means of establishing a supremacy over the northern and richest province of the great continent, where the Mogul Emperors still reigned with all their ancient grandeur, but with little of their ancient power.

Between 1740 and 1756 the real ruler of Bengal was an Afghan soldier named Aliverdy Khan, a ruthless and powerful man who had been appointed Viceroy of the Emperor at Delhi, a weak and effeminate Prince who was a mere puppet in the hands of his lieutenant. Both the French and English had trading companies at the mouth of the Hoogly River, the gateway of Bengal, the latter being established at Calcutta, the former at Chandernagore. During the governorship of Aliverdy Khan, the rival companies had been kept in strict order, and while fighting was taking place in the south, they were compelled to keep the peace. But when Aliverdy Khan died, in 1756, he was succeeded by his adopted son, Surajah Dowlah, who had none of the strength and genius of his great predecessor. This young Nabob was the worst type of an Oriental Prince. From his boyhood he had been pampered

and spoilt, and had weakened his body and mind by every kind of self-indulgence. His one great passion was a hatred of the English, whom he believed were intriguing against him with the Emperor at Delhi.

When the Seven Years' War broke out in Europe, and France and England at last broke the nominal truce existing between them, the East India Company's settlement at Calcutta began to erect fortifications in view of an attack from their rivals at Chandernagore. This work came to the ears of Surajah Dowlah, and he instantly construed it into an insult and threat against himself. Raising an army, the passionate young Nabob immediately advanced upon Calcutta, threatening death and destruction to the Company's officials. They were wholly unprepared for this attack, and many of them fled to the trading-ships in the river with the women and children. But 170 men, with more courage than their fellows, determined to hold the fort at all costs and to keep the English flag flying.

They elected a gentleman named Holwell for their chief, and for two days and nights made a gallant stand against the hordes of Indian soldiers below the walls. It soon became evident, however, that they would eventually be captured, and in all probability massacred to a man if they continued the struggle, so on the third day Mr. Holwell took advantage of the flag of truce sent in by the Nabob, and surrendered under promise of life for all the defenders.

It is probable that Surajah Dowlah intended to keep that promise. At least, there is no evidence to the contrary. But his Mohammedan officers, to whom the prisoners were entrusted, thrust them all into a cell in the fort, about 18 feet square, and with only two small gratings through which any air might come. The sufferings of that night in the 'Black Hole of Calcutta' have been described often enough in all their ghastly details. A hundred and forty-six English men and women—for there were women among them—confined in a stifling room in the heat of an Indian summer, without water,

packed so tightly that their bodies were wedged together in one solid block of human flesh—the horrors of it may be better imagined than described. As the hours passed their groans and cries became fainter, and at last, when morning broke and the prison door was opened, only twenty-three gasping and ghastly creatures staggered out from a chamber which was heaped up with suffocated and trampled corpses.

When the news was brought to Surajah Dowlah, he expressed the utmost unconcern, and proceeded to write a letter to the Mogul Emperor, in which he exulted in his 'victory' over the English. Leaving a garrison in command of the fort and in charge of the survivors of the 'Black Hole,' he renamed Calcutta as Alinagur ('the fort of God') and returned in triumph to his palace at Murshidabad.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE WAR WITH SURAJAH DOWLAH

THE news of the horrid outrage at Calcutta stirred the deepest indignation of the English people, and a great cry went up for the punishment of the man who had permitted it. The eyes of all our countrymen were turned to one man as the avenger of this dastardly crime, and Robert Clive was not the one to listen inactively to such an appeal in such a cause. He had returned from England—where he had run through a large fortune in a very quick time—and was now back at Madras. On his volunteering to lead an expedition against Surajah Dowlah, Mr. Drake, the governor of the Company's factory at Madras, appointed him as Commander-in-Chief in Bengal with full military direction and power. An army of 900 Europeans and 1,200 sepoy was raised, chiefly by the energy and enthusiasm of Clive himself, who knew that much more was at stake than the punishment of the cruel and dissolute Nabob. 'I flatter myself,' he wrote to his directors,

‘that this expedition will not end with the taking of Calcutta only, and that the Company’s estate in those parts will be settled in a better and more lasting condition than ever. There is less reason to expect a check from the Nabob’s forces than from the nature of the climate or country. . . . I hope we shall be able to dispossess the French of Chandernagore, and leave Calcutta in a state of defence.’

The fleet which took Clive and his troops to the mouth of the Hoogly was under the command of Admiral Watson. The voyage was not accomplished without some tragic happenings, for a monsoon broke over the ships and scattered them, while the rice for the native soldiers became exhausted, and many of them died of famine rather than outrage their religious principles, which forbade them to eat the salted beef and pork.

Nor were the first operations on land so successful as might have been expected with Clive in command. For the first and last time he was ‘caught napping’ by the enemy. It had been decided, contrary to Clive’s advice, to march upon a small fort called Baj Baj, on the left bank of the Hoogly, about ten miles below Calcutta. The troops advanced through a swampy jungle, and after a sixteen hours’ tramp, lay down in an exhausted condition in the neighbourhood of the fort. No sentries were posted, and Clive was taken completely by surprise when his troops were suddenly attacked by Manik Chund, the native Governor of Calcutta, with between 2,000 to 3,000 horse and foot. The British soldiers made a desperate resistance, and succeeded in beating off the enemy, but they had suffered severe loss from their lack of caution. That evening a drunken soldier, getting out of bounds, scrambled over the parapet of Baj Baj, and yelled out that he had captured the fort. His words turned out to be true, for when his fellow-soldiers came up, they found the place deserted by its garrison, who had retreated to Calcutta. That city capitulated on January 2, 1757, and was taken possession of by Admiral Watson’s marines and Clive’s

sepoys. Unfortunately, quarrels broke out among the officers of 'John Company' and those of the Crown. Captain Eyre Coote—afterwards famous as the hero of Wandiwash—was appointed Governor of Calcutta by Admiral Watson, acting as the King's representative, and claimed a higher command than Clive, who was only in the service of the East India Company. To a man of Clive's temperament this jealousy was galling in the extreme, but he did not allow it to interfere with his duty or his judgment. Fortunately, in the presence of danger, and when news was brought that Surajah Dowlah was advancing with a large army, all personal enmities were sunk for the time being, and officers of Crown and Company cooperated loyally in preparing a 'warm reception' for the Nabob.

Clive himself led an attack upon the enemy's headquarters, but owing to a dense fog the column missed its way, became entangled, unwittingly, between Surajah Dowlah's lines, and when the mist lifted, found itself confronted on both sides by the Nabob's army. Clive was in a tight corner, but, as usual, his nerve was never so steady, his courage never so high, as when in the teeth of danger. His men behaved with splendid gallantry, and cut their way through the enemy in a retreat to Calcutta—that was as heroic as a victory. Surajah Dowlah was forcibly impressed with the fighting qualities of the English and their sepoys, and on the following day he sent envoys with an offer of negotiations.

Clive was willing enough to arrange a truce for a while. Before crushing the Nabob, it was necessary to prevent assistance being given to him by the French garrison at Chandernagore, to whom Surajah Dowlah was sending urgent messages for help at the same time as he was offering his friendship to the English.

The French had anticipated the attack, and for weeks they had been strengthening their batteries and mounting guns on the fort. They also sunk several large ships in the Hoogly to obstruct the navigation of the English fleet. But their

efforts were without avail. Clive carried the fort by assault, and Admiral Watson found a passage up the channel in spite of the sunken ships. The losses were heavy on both sides, and the British fleet was riddled with shot and shell. But in the end the garrison surrendered, and the greatest element of danger to the English campaign in Bengal was thereby avoided.

Surajah Dowlah was dismayed at the defeat of the French, whom he had been bribing heavily to come to his aid. He now turned to another quarter for European reinforcements. One of Dupleix's most brilliant Generals, a famous French officer named the Comte de Bussy, was established with a large army of French soldiers and trained sepoys in a province of India called the Northern Circars, lying along the coast of the Bay of Bengal, on the eastern side of the Deccan. De Bussy's army had raised an Indian pretender named Salabat Jang to the throne of the Deccan, and as a recompense he had been made Viceroy of the Circars. Eventually the Nizam, as this Prince was called, became jealous of the power of his lieutenant, and besieged the Comte de Bussy at Hyderabad. He was defeated, however, by the daring Frenchman, who recovered all his power, and henceforth had Salabat Jang completely under his influence.

It was to this French army that Surajah Dowlah now sent messengers offering De Bussy huge sums of money if he would bring his army to attack the English under Clive, 'to whom,' said the Nabob, 'may all evils attend.'

But De Bussy was not eager to leave his own province at this time, having had long experience of Oriental treachery, and fearing that in his absence the Nizam of the Deccan might again prove unfaithful.

Meanwhile Robert Clive was engaged in a deep-laid scheme for the overthrow of Surajah Dowlah. The Nabob had established his vast camp on a field called Plassey, so named from a little red flower that covered the plain as if it were stained with blood. Here, as Clive well knew, he spent his days in that

life of immoral luxury and vicious cruelty for which he was notorious. His own officers and courtiers hated him with a loathing that was hidden beneath a cloak of flattery and fear, and Clive determined to make use of these secret enemies for his own purpose.

The Nabob's most powerful General was a man named Meer Jaffir, who was suspected of harbouring an ambition to overthrow his master and make himself Viceroy in his stead. Robert Clive, unfortunately for his good name and fame, put into practice some of those wiles which were habitually used in Oriental statecraft, but were not in the code of honour belonging to English officers and gentlemen. While sending flattering messages and offers of friendship to the Nabob, he entered into secret negotiations with Meer Jaffir, and offered to place him in the office of Viceroy if he would desert with his own troops to the English side. A crafty and avaricious merchant named Omichund was used as a go-between, and this man was also promised huge bribes for his treacherous services. But Omichund was too greedy, and his demands were so exorbitant that Clive became disgusted with him. He could not afford to break with him, as he would at once reveal the negotiations with Meer Jaffir to the Nabob. So Clive tricked him by drafting out a false agreement, to which he not only attached his own signature, but also that of Admiral Watson, who with the honesty of a British sailor refused to have anything to do with such a shifty scheme. This agreement was drawn up in duplicate, in one of which, written on red paper, the demands of Omichund were inserted, while on the other all reference to them was omitted. The former alone was submitted to the merchant himself, while the other was kept by Clive.

It is a painful thing to refer to this episode, which is a blot that will always stain the otherwise great and brilliant reputation of the founder of our Indian Empire. Attempts have been made to whitewash the transaction, but it was a false, dishonourable act, unworthy of a gentleman, and setting a most evil and perilous example to Clive's successors.

The trick succeeded more completely than it deserved to do. Omichund carried through his bargain, and Meer Jaffir was induced to betray the Nabob, and promised to bring over at least 3,000 of his master's cavalry.

By some means or other the news of this coming treachery reached the ears of Surajah Dowlah, and he took the precaution of surrounding his General's house with troops, while with more-energy than usual he prepared for war. Meer Jaffir's heart seemed to have failed him at the last moment, and he tried to disarm Surajah Dowlah's suspicions by protesting his fidelity. The Nabob was fully convinced that his powerful lieutenant was in league with the enemy, but he could not overcome his cowardice, and his terror was so great that he pretended to believe these false assurances of friendship.

Now Clive threw off all disguise, and, sending word to Meer Jaffir to hold himself in readiness, advanced rapidly with his army to Plassey. The monsoon had set in, and they had to march through a torrent of rain. They trudged through thick mud, and several times had to wade through water up to their waists, so that it was difficult to keep their powder dry. After a weary march they reached Plassey, and Clive halted in front of a mango grove outside the village. As the army was taking up its position the sounds of military music were borne upon the breeze. It was a warning that the enemy was close at hand.

On the following day the Nabob was first to advance to the attack. He was confident in the strength of his great army, as well he might have been, for against Clive's 1,100 Europeans, 2,000 sepoys, and 8 field-pieces, he had 35,000 foot-soldiers, 15,000 horse, and 53 guns. These last-named weapons were dragged in advance of his battalions by long teams of white oxen, and pushed from behind by great elephants. But as the great mass of animals and men came on, Clive's gunners, in the shelter of the mango-grove, poured in a well-directed fire, that broke the enemy's ranks and sent them back in quick retreat to their entrenched camp, where, having had enough

fighting for one day, they laid down their arms, got out their cooking-pots, and prepared to have dinner. But this was not a method of warfare agreeable to European soldiers. Clive was discourteous enough to interrupt his enemy's meal. Abandoning the mango-grove, he sent forward a column of his British red-coats, who quickly sent the native soldiers flying from their pots and platters. A number of Surajah Dowlah's best officers were killed, and about 500 of his men, in the retreat, which soon developed into a wild stampede. The Nabob himself—poor trembling coward!—afraid of treachery from his own troops, mounted a swift mule, and, with 2,000 troops, fled from the field. Meer Jaffir, who had all this time remained neutral, now came over to the English side, with his cavalry, thus completing the irretrievable disaster of Surajah Dowlah's army.

As the traitor advanced to Clive's tent he was a little doubtful of his reception, for his bargain had been fulfilled rather late in the day. He was seen to start violently when a guard of honour turned out to salute him; but his fears were soon laid to rest when Clive advanced, and, greeting him as the Nabob of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, urged him to proceed to Murshidabad, to take his seat upon the vice-regal throne, and to receive the submission of the native officers.

In the meanwhile the wretched fugitive, Surajah Dowlah, had been deserted by his courtiers and attendants at the palace at Murshidabad, in which he had taken refuge, and again sought safety in flight. Disguised as a peasant, and accompanied by his favourite wife and one faithful servant, he dropped down the Ganges in a little boat in the darkness of the night. Landing at a village in the morning to obtain some refreshment, he was unlucky enough to find his way to the hut of an Indian whose ears and nose had been cut off by his orders some months before. The man had his revenge. He sent word of the Nabob's presence to his enemies, the followers of Meer Jaffir, who, taking him prisoner, hurried him back to Murshidabad, where they put him secretly to death.

Robert Clive now followed Meer Jaffir to this beautiful city, and marched with his 3,000 men through the dense masses of Indian people, so numerous, as he wrote at the time, that, 'if inclined to destroy the Europeans, they might have done so with sticks and stones.' Here in the great marble palace of the Nabobs Clive placed the traitor on the ivory throne of his murdered predecessor, and, with the consent of the Mogul Emperor at Delhi, proclaimed Meer Jaffir Viceroy of the great provinces of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa.

Clive now became all-powerful in Bengal, being appointed first Governor of the East India Company's possessions in that province. Meer Jaffir was deeply disappointed in his expectations of ruling in the same independent way as Surajah Dowlah, and found that Clive was really his master, and that he could act in no way without the great Englishman's authority. The natives were deeply impressed by the power of the British, and paid supreme homage to Clive himself. The East India Company received unlimited privileges of trade, and their wealth increased enormously.

As Macaulay says in his brilliant essay on Clive, 'His power was now boundless, and far surpassed even that which Dupleix had attained in the South of India. Meer Jaffir regarded him with slavish awe. On one occasion the Nabob spoke with severity to a native chief of high rank, whose followers had been engaged in a brawl with some of the Company's sepoys.

"Are you yet to learn," he said, 'who that Colonel Clive is, and in what station God has placed him?'

'The chief who, as a famous jester and an old friend of Meer Jaffir, could venture to take liberties, answered:

"I affront the Colonel!—I, who never get up in the morning without making three low bows to his jackass!"

'This was hardly an exaggeration. Europeans and natives were alike at Clive's feet.'

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE STRUGGLE FOR SUPREMACY

It was at this time that the French, who had been losing ground heavily after the recall of Dupleix, made renewed efforts to overthrow the power of their English rivals. A General named Count Lally-Tollendal, was sent out to the French station at Pondicherry, where he was joined by the Count de Bussy, who was recalled from his province of the Circars. Together they besieged Madras, but were heavily defeated by the indomitable Major Lawrence. Meanwhile, directly Bussy left the Circars a pretender seized the province and called to the British for assistance.

Clive at once sent Colonel Forde with a strong column, and again the French, under the Marquis de Conflans, were overcome, thus bringing another great territory within British influence.

Finally, at the great battle of the Wandiwash the French armies sustained their last and final defeat at the hands of Sir Eyre Coote. Count Lally-Tollendal had a force of 2,500 French soldiers and 3,000 sepoys, whereas Coote had no more than 1,900 British and 2,300 native infantry and cavalry. The odds were on the side of the French, but Eyre Coote's brilliant tactics and the gallantry of his men were more than a sufficient match for his opponents. They were outmanœuvred; their veteran regiments were broken by the irresistible charges of English bayonets. Finally, with a loss of 600 men and eighteen guns, they fell back on Pondicherry. Surrounded by Eyre Coote's infantry, and blockaded from the sea by a British fleet which cut off all supplies, Count Lally was at last compelled to capitulate with his garrison. It was the last irretrievable blow to France, and though Pondicherry and a few other trading settlements were restored to her by the

Treaty of Paris two years later, the French Empire in India had ceased to exist.

As soon as the French were done with, the English in India were confronted with a new foe. War had broken out between our country and Holland, and the Dutch, who had a trading station on the Hoogly, at once entered into secret negotiations with Meer Jaffir, who, with the heart of a traitor, could not remain loyal to the nation that had given him a throne. A Dutch fleet attacked Calcutta, but Clive, with his usual energy and success, defeated these forces in a decisive battle, and brought the Nabob more firmly under his iron heel.

No sooner was this accomplished than a fresh trouble broke out. An Afghan Prince named Ahmed Shah, with a great nation of warriors behind him, advanced towards Delhi in the hope of shattering the weak dynasty of the Mogul Emperor and obtaining the dominion of Northern India. Fortunately for British rule in India, the Mahrattas, a Hindu race of wild tribesmen, hated the Afghans with a deadly rivalry, and as they also had designs on the Mogul Empire, they gave battle to Ahmed Shah's army at Paniput, on the Jumna. The fighting was so ferocious, and the slaughter was so terrific on either side, that the Mahrattas were nearly annihilated, while the Afghans themselves were crippled beyond all hope of further conquest in India for many years to come. Thus Clive was once more relieved of a great peril which had threatened the continuance of his newly-built supremacy in Bengal.

He now returned to England, where he was received with the highest marks of honour by the nation. It was his intention to promote the great ambitions of his life by giving the benefit of his experience and advice to the British Government with regard to the problems of Indian trade and the control of the provinces over which he had acquired such supreme influence. For the purpose he entered Parliament, but for some reason or other his advice was never much sought after by the Ministers of his day, and was less often acted upon.

Meanwhile, during his absence great abuses began to prevail in India among the East India Company's officials, and most of Clive's good work of consolidating the Company's strength and influence was undone by the folly and greed of incompetent men. For, having placed Meer Jaffir on his throne, the Company bled this wretched Nabob to the extent of so many millions that, in order to replenish his exhausted treasury, he was forced to grind down his unhappy peasants and merchants with unbearable taxes. The Company's servants, underpaid clerks and rapacious officials, indulged in private trading with the natives on their own account, and as the power of Englishmen was now almost unlimited through the genius of Clive, they extorted money from the traders and merchants of Bengal and Madras by the most corrupt and tyrannous means, so that they had been more prosperous even under the rule of such a vicious tyrant as Surajah Dowlah himself. Having got all they could out of Meer Jaffir, the Company deposed him in favour of his son-in-law, Meer Kasim, from whom they extracted still further millions as the price of his nominal power. But in this they overreached themselves, for the new Nabob, exasperated beyond endurance by the greed of his task-masters, revolted from them and declared war against the Company. He was instantly deposed, and poor Meer Jaffir was dragged out again and reinstated on his throne, while the fugitive laid waste the Company's territory, and massacred as many English as he could lay hands on. Later on he joined forces with the Nabob of Oudh and advanced to Patna, with threats of vengeance and extermination.

Fortunately, Major Monckton, with an English army, succeeded in inflicting severe damage upon the combined armies, and drove them back in an utter rout.

It was on the same day that this battle took place that Clive arrived at Calcutta. His coming must have given a thrill of something like fear to many an official of John Company who had been gorging himself on extortions from the

Indian people. They knew what manner of man they would now have to deal with. Even as a young man there was something terrible and awe-inspiring in his harsh temper, his sternness, his strict discipline, his ruthless determination to have his own way. But now he came as an avenger of wrong, a champion of justice and honesty for the native people. Well indeed might the horde of trading officials and commercial soldiers have trembled in their shoes when Sabat Jung, the daring in war, set foot again in India. His first act was to depose the collectors of revenue under the Nabob of Bengal, who had been the greatest criminal in taxing the industry of the natives; his next was to proclaim a new rule in the by-laws of the East India Company that no official, clerk, or soldier in the Company's service should be allowed to carry on private trade of any sort whatever.

A howl of rage and indignation went up at this prohibition of their most cherished privilege. Many of the officers of the Company's troops broke out into open mutiny, and others resigned their commissions. Calmly and sternly Clive dealt with them as rebels. He cashiered them from the ~~service~~, and in their place promoted steady and trustworthy non-commissioned men to the commissioned ranks; while any officials who persisted in disregarding his edict were sharply punished. These strong measures had the desired effect. Many of the rebellious officers pleaded for reinstatement under promise of submission, and the Indian people, who had begun to hate the name of Englishman, saw with joy that justice was to be given to them under British rule, and that they would no longer be cheated out of the products of their industry. It was Clive's greatest victory—greater than any he had gained on the field of battle, for he had fought and conquered the devils of greed and corruption, which are more difficult to defeat than undisciplined native soldiers or weak and vicious native Princes.

With this great work accomplished, Clive returned to England. But though he had had his own way in India,

and had 'cleansed the Augean stables,' he had raised up many enemies against him among the Council of Directors in London. Infamous stories began to be circulated about his conduct in India. He was accused of every outrageous crime and immorality. The public mind was poisoned against him, and at last the slanders became so malignant and clamorous that he was called upon to defend his conduct before the Parliamentary Committee, 'more,' as he said, 'like a cattle-stealer than as a Member of the House of Commons.' One of the chief accusations against him was that he had committed a crime when he accepted a sum of £200,000 from Meer Jaffir as a reward for having placed him on the throne. There is no need here to discuss at length how far Clive was wrong in this matter. There can be no doubt that nowadays a General would have no right to accept any sum of money from a foreign Prince for services rendered in warfare. There is now, indeed, an absolute rule against such a practice for all servants of the Crown. There was a difference, however, in Clive's case. In the first place, he was a servant of the East India Company, and not appointed directly by the British Government. Secondly, it was the national custom of Indian Princes to make rich presents to those who had served them.

Clive made a long and eloquent speech in his own defence. When he came to this last accusation, he broke out with indignant words:

'When I recollect entering the Nabob's treasury at Murshidabad, with heaps of gold and silver to the right and left, and these crowned with jewels, by Heaven! at this moment do I stand astonished at my own moderation!'

So strong and clear was his defence that, in spite of the prejudices of those sitting in judgment upon his character and conduct, they were forced to admit that he had served the highest interests of his nation with a genius and, on the whole, with a high-mindedness that deserved the gratitude of his countrymen for all time. The House of Commons therefore acquitted him of any misdoing, and a resolution

was passed unanimously that 'Robert, Lord Clive, did render great and meritorious service to his country.'

The English people, who had followed the course of the trial with the utmost excitement and interest, had a revulsion of feeling, and once more Clive was the national hero. But his popularity came too late. The proud man's spirit had been broken by the ignoble manner in which he had been dealt with. Conscious that he had devoted himself entirely to the service of his country, he had been treated in return like a common malefactor. The bitterness and injustice of it preyed upon his mind. He brooded over it continually, until his mind became unhinged and his depression of spirits became a fixed melancholia, which no efforts of his friends could remove. At last, in his house in Berkeley Square, where he had shut himself up in solitude, this great, unhappy man, who had given an Empire to England, put an end to his life with his own hand.

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE NATIVE WARS

CLIVE's great work in India was carried on and completed by succeeding Governor-Generals—Warren Hastings, Cornwallis, Wellesley, and Dalhousie—men of varying abilities, but with the one ideal of making the British supreme throughout the length and breadth of India.

During Clive's impeachment and trial the British Government had been brought to realize that the power of the East India Company must be regulated by the Crown, and that the business of Empire must not be left entirely in the hands of company directors and officials, whose chief ambition was naturally directed to the increase of wealth and the swelling of their dividends by taxes on the Princes and people under their influence. The Regulating Act was therefore passed in Parliament, and henceforth a large share of the East India

Company's power passed under the control of a Governor-General and a Council nominated by Ministers of the Crown.

Warren Hastings, the first Governor-General to be appointed under this new Regulating Act, was a very different man to his predecessor, Robert Clive. A little pale gentleman of neat appearance and quiet, pleasant manners, he had none of Clive's constitutional daring in war or harsh and dominant temper. Nevertheless, under his delicate and gentle exterior there was a strong will and a high spirit, which grappled with many thorny problems of Indian administration, and put down many rogues and cheats who had thought it easy, but found it very difficult, to lead this little man by the nose. His first act was to bring to trial two Ministers of Finance in Bengal, who had been guilty of embezzling money they had obtained from the natives by unjust and oppressive taxation. He then instituted many valuable reforms in the system of taxation generally, and also in the administration of justice in the Indian law-courts. By peaceful and friendly means he obtained alliances with many powerful Princes of native States, and by this means enlarged and strengthened the sphere of British influence in India. Hating war, he was nevertheless no coward when war became inevitable, and he was prompt in sending British troops to check the Mahratta tribes, who had now regained some of the strength which had been shattered in their tremendous defeat under Ahmed Shah, the ruler of Afghanistan. Unfortunately, our Generals who took part in this Mahratta War were without ability, and, worse still, may even be accused of cowardice. When they arrived at Poona, the capital of one of the Mahratta States, they were seized with an unaccountable panic, and, throwing their guns into the lake, retreated in disorder, and then signed a shameful treaty with the enemy, which abandoned much that had been gained by hard fighting in Western India since 1765. Warren Hastings was profoundly indignant when he heard the news, and, refusing to acknowledge the compact, immediately despatched fresh troops

against the Mahrattas under three captains, named Goddard, Bruce, and Popham. Many heroic exploits were added to the glory of British arms, among which was the capture of the rock fortress of Gwalior by Bruce with two companies of sepoy and twenty British soldiers. Eventually the Mahratta armies were heavily defeated in several pitched battles, and they were forced to purchase peace by the surrender of large territories.

In the meanwhile, however, a new foe had arisen against British rule. This was Hyder Ali, the ruler of Mysore, and one of the greatest Mohammedan Princes in India. This remarkable man had sprung from the lowest ranks to the exalted position he now held. His grandfather had been a wandering fakir, one of those religious fanatics who in a naked and filthy condition travelled about to the sacred shrines of India, carrying plague and disease in their wake. Hyder Ali's father was a policeman in Mysore, a man of humble means and despised occupation. When a lad the future ruler of Mysore himself had idled his time, and his ne'er-do-well habits gave no promise of his future greatness. But eventually he became a soldier, and in several wars with the Mahrattas, who were afterwards compelled to pay tribute to their victors, he showed such military genius and superb courage that he rapidly obtained promotion and became the most powerful General of Mysore. Eventually he deposed the Maharajah of that State, in whose service he had been, and, allowing him to retain his title, took over the reins of power.

Twice he had waged war with the British when Clive was in power, but he had then entered into alliance with them, and asked for aid when he was defeated by the Mahrattas. That help had been refused, and henceforth Hyder Ali was the fiercest enemy of the English power.

In 1778 he and his son, Tipu Sahib, who afterwards succeeded to his father's power and inherited his legacy of hate, descended like a thunderbolt into the Carnatic, and with fire and sword swept to the very walls of Madras, leaving in their

wake a long line of country marked by burning villages, trampled fields, and festering corpses. It was the darkest hour of Warren Hastings' governorship in India, but when 'the Tiger of Mysore' was preparing to pounce upon Madras itself Hastings sent in haste for the old hero, Sir Eyre Coote, who had learnt the rules of Indian warfare under Clive. With this gallant old man to lead them, our troops attacked the armies of Hyder Ali and Tipu Sahib with desperate valour, and defeated them in three decisive battles. At Porto Novo and Sholingarh the Mysoreans left thousands of dead upon the field, and Hyder Ali, who watched the defeat as he sat enthroned on rising ground to the rear of his army, burst into a frenzy of passion as he saw the irresistible onrush of the British red-coats. It was in these actions that the 73rd Highlanders first won their honours in India, where in after-years their regiment was to get still greater glory. Their bagpipes sounded loud and shrill above the din of battle, and Indian soldiers learnt to fear that weird and wonderful music which seemed to inspire the bare-legged warriors with such martial fury. Sir Eyre Coote himself had wanted to do away with the pipes, which he thought at first were 'useless relics of the barbarous ages, and not in any manner calculated to discipline troops.' At Porto Novo, however, where the 73rd was the only European regiment among the army of sepoys who defeated Hyder Ali, the General's attention was specially attracted to the pipers, who always blew the hardest when the enemy's fire was hottest. 'Well done, my brave fellows!' shouted the old General at last, thoroughly converted to such gallant strains; 'you shall have a set of silver pipes for this.' He was as good as his word, and after the battle he gave them the money to buy the new instruments, on which they recorded their General's flattering words.

When Hyder Ali died, an old war-dog of eighty-three, his son Tipu Sahib gathered together fresh armies and hurled them at the British, ravaging the territory on his march as his father had done before him.

Warren Hastings now returned to England, receiving in return for his high services an impeachment before the bar of Parliament on grave charges of corruption, tyranny, and other crimes. Thus in those days did England reward her faithful servants! The trial dragged on for no less than seven years, at the end of which Hastings found himself acquitted of every charge, and at the same time absolutely ruined in fortune. The East India Company, however, which appreciated his great achievements better than the Government, made him a magnificent allowance, which enabled him to spend the rest of his life as a country gentleman in peace and happiness.

He was succeeded in India by Lord Cornwallis, who still retained the favour of the Crown and the admiration of the people, in spite of his disasters during the American War of Independence. He proved more successful in India than in North America, and retrieved his reputation not only as a competent Commander-in-Chief of the Indian army, but as a statesman of a strong and liberal character.

He arrived in India at a time when Tipu Sahib's star was in the ascendant. The Mysore warrior had captured several British forts and garrisoned towns, throwing his prisoners into foul dungeons, where they languished in torture until death put an end to the sufferings of many of these unfortunate men. At Bangalore the cell is still shown where Sir David Baird, one of the best and bravest of our officers, was confined for many months. It measures from 12 to 15 feet square, and its roof is so low that a man can scarcely stand upright.*

Cornwallis was prompt in regaining his forces to thrust back

* So abject was the fear of Tipu Sahib that a humiliating treaty was arranged by the East India Company at Madras, and it is related that on the occasion of its signature the English Commissioners stood with their heads uncovered and the treaty in their hands for two hours, using every form of flattery and supplication to induce the compliance of the Prince. This behaviour inflamed the arrogance of Tipu Sahib to a still greater degree, and in spite of the treaty his aggressions continued upon British territory.

the Mysore invaders. Bangalore was taken, and Sir David Baird released from his dungeon, and the British army then pushed on to the walls of Seringapatam, where Tipu had retired with the main body of his army. Cornwallis, with a gallant old officer named General Meadows as second in command, advanced in three columns to attack the enemy's great host on each side. A tremendous battle was fought, and Tipu Sahib's army eventually gave way along their whole line, and retreated in disorderly panic to the shelter of the fortress, leaving 4,000 killed and wounded beneath the walls.

Tipu Sahib was mad with rage and anguish. He resolved to avenge his defeat by assassinating the victorious General. The plan seemed to him an easy one. He knew by his spies that Cornwallis was a man of simple habit, and made his headquarters in a tent that was generally unguarded save by one or two sentries. Tipu, therefore, called for a party of his Mohammedan horsemen, and, having drugged them with the intoxicating 'bhang,' so that they were maddened with what is the Eastern equivalent of 'Dutch courage,' he gave them orders to make a dash through the English camp and cut the General to pieces in his tent. It is possible the plot might have succeeded, for the men were not to be easily distinguished from the native cavalry in English service. But they went about their work too noisily, and the outrage was prevented by a party of Bombay sepoys who intercepted them on their way to the headquarters' tent.

Finally, Tipu Sahib was compelled to sue for peace, which was granted him on terms very favourable to the East India Company, who regained all their territory. It was not, however, the last of our wars with the Nizam of Mysore, and he was soon on the war-path again with a great army, officered and trained by French soldiers.

General Meadows, who has been previously mentioned as second in command of Cornwallis, did some very brilliant work in these campaigns. He was not a great General, but he was a dashing leader of forlorn hopes in daring assaults,

and he was adored by his troops for his unfailing good nature and audacity. He was a very little man, and in storming one of Tipu's forts he found, to his extreme disgust, that he could not scale the breach which his men were mounting with an impetuous ardour. Thereupon he called out in his shrill voice, 'Bravo, my fine fellows! Well done! But is there none of you that can stop to help up your little General?'

'Bedad!' said a tall Irish fellow, 'is that you, General? Then by the powers we'll not go without you.' So saying, he hoisted the gallant little man on his shoulder, and carried him through the breach. It was the same General who gave out in the official orders to the troops that the word 'difficulty' was unknown in the military dictionary, and among such soldiers as he had then the honour to command.

On another occasion, when reconnoitring in the Mysore country, he was shot at by the enemy's gunners. A 24-pound shot struck the ground in front of him, and bowled along towards him. General Meadows pulled up his horse on its haunches, and taking off his hat with great politeness, said good-humouredly as the shot passed him, 'I beg you to proceed, sir; I never dispute precedence with any gentleman of your family!'

Tipu Sahib was not finally overthrown until 1799, when the Marquis of Wellesley had succeeded Cornwallis as Governor-General, and the army of Mysore was surrounded and besieged at Seringapatam by General Harris and Sir David Baird. For many days the walls of the city were battered with shell, and when a breach was made, Sir David Baird's tall and stately old figure could be seen standing on the parapet of the British entrenchment, silhouetted against the clear Indian sky. 'Come, my brave fellows!' he cried, careless of the bullets that whistled around him, 'follow me, and show yourselves worthy of the name of British soldiers!' With a crushing cheer the troops rushed forward. The first man to reach the breach was a stalwart Scot named Graham. He ran forward swiftly amid a hail of bullets, and, mounting

the crumbling walls, pulled off his hat, shouting, 'Success to Lieutenant Graham!' (alluding to the commission he hoped to get). When his comrades came up, Graham dragged up the colours and planted them on the rampart, with a shout of, 'I'll show them the British flag!' Hardly were the words out of his mouth than he fell dead beside the colours, shot clean through the head.

Raising the flag again, Sir David Baird's troops fixed bayonets, and, scrambling through the breach, drove the enemy back until they reached the Nizam's palace. A fierce fight raged round this building, and at last, when the ground was soaked with blood, and dead bodies lay heaped beneath the walls, the enemy fled in all directions. It was the last of Tipu Sahib; his body was found beneath a heap of corpses where the fight had been fiercest. The story goes that, having fought with desperate courage, and faint from loss of blood, with seven wounds, he had been carried a little distance by his servants and placed in a palanquin so that he might escape. But the passage was blocked with the bodies of his soldiers, and he crawled out of his carriage to make his way over them. At that moment, however, the flash of his jewelled sword-belt attracted the eyes of an English soldier, who snatched at it. The Prince, drawing his sword, tried to beat the man off, but the fellow levelled his musket, and blew out the brains of the Prince, whose very name had been a terror in India for many years.

After the capture of the Nizam's capital the English soldiers got out of hand, and, tempted by the wealth and magnificence of the palaces and the merchants' bazaars, started looting. During the night a report was received by General Baird that the treasury of Tipu had been forced, and that the soldiers were actually loading themselves with gold. It appeared that, although the chief door was guarded securely, the looters had discovered a secret passage which gave entrance to the treasure-chamber. General Baird sent Colonel Wallace to inquire into the report, which that officer

found was true. The treasury was crowded with soldiers, drunk with the sight of great masses of gold coin and precious stones, with which they were loading themselves. Colonel Wallace took them prisoners, and the next morning General Baird was reinforced by an officer, who with a strong hand soon put down all looting. He had gallows erected in seven streets, from which seven culprits were soon dangling. This officer was Colonel Arthur Wellesley, the brother of the Governor-General, and our future 'Iron Duke.'

With the fall of Tipu Sahib's dynasty, the whole of Mysore passed under British protection, and thus the greater part of Central and Southern India was by this time, to all intents and purposes, within the domination of the British Empire.

The Marquis of Wellesley was now able to direct his whole efforts to crushing, once and for all, the Mahratta chiefs, who in spite of a series of defeats, spread over a number of years, were still aggressively powerful along the valley of the Ganges as far as Delhi, where the Mogul Emperor was their prisoner, and in the States of Poona, Berar, and Baroda, where Mahratta chiefs were dangerous neighbours of the native Princes who had given in their allegiance.

At the Battle of Assaye, Arthur Wellesley, afterwards Duke of Wellington, crushed the Mahrattas under their great fighting chief, Sindhia. It was a frightful carnage, the enemy losing more than 12,000 killed and wounded, while on our side the casualties amounted to one-third of the whole army, which, however, numbered only about 6,000 men.

Wellesley followed up this victory by another, equally decisive, at a place called Argaum, where the enemy fled after a short resistance, pursued for miles, through a moonlight night, by the British cavalry, who destroyed great numbers and captured guns, elephants, camels, and baggage. The Mahratta chiefs of the province of Berar, finding a further campaign impossible after these heavy defeats, made the best of a bad bargain, and, ceding a large amount of territory to the

victors, signed a treaty in which they agreed to recognise the predominant influence of the British Government in India.

Meanwhile, one of our Generals, named Lake, was conducting a brilliant campaign along the valley of the Ganges, where the remaining Mahratta power was established. He had to face a dangerous foe, for the 36,000 troops which composed the enemy's army had been trained by French officers, and were assisted by small bodies of French veterans, under General Perron and General Bourgain, whose reputation stood high for daring and strategy. Lake had only 10,000 men under his command, and as he advanced from Cawnpore, capturing fort after fort and leaving garrisons to defend them, his army was reduced to 4,500 when he stood before the walls of Delhi. With this small force he could not risk an assault on the city, where 19,000 men were stationed behind the ramparts. By a clever feint of retreat, however, he drew out the whole army, under General Bourgain; then, wheeling swiftly, the British lines swept upon the enemy with fixed bayonets. The Mahrattas turned and fled in the wildest disorder, but before they could get to the shelter of the city from the open ground Lake's men were among them, and awful work went on with sabre and bayonet. The Mahrattas left 3,000 dead and dying men on the burning plain, and General Bourgain surrendered the city of the Moguls and the surviving troops.

General Lake entered Delhi in triumph, and at once delivered from his captivity the old Emperor, Shah Alum, who was a prisoner in the ancient palace of the Moguls. He was seated under a small tattered canopy, the remnant of his former state, his person emaciated by indigence and infirmities, his countenance disfigured with the loss of his eyes, and marked with extreme old age and a settled melancholy. But in an answer to Lake's compliments and messages of deliverance, the poor old man, the representative of the once omnipotent Moguls, turned his blind eyes to the Englishman, and, with a flow of Oriental rhetoric, greeted him as 'the Sword of

State, the hero of the land, and the victorious in war,' expressing his delight at receiving the promise of British protection.

'It is impossible,' wrote Lord Wellesley, the Governor-General at this time, 'to describe the impression which the General's conduct on this interesting occasion has made on the minds of the inhabitants of Delhi, and of all the Mussulmans who have had an opportunity of being made acquainted with the occurrences of September 16. In the metaphorical language of Asia, the native news-writers who described this extraordinary scene have declared that His Majesty Shah Alum recovered his sight from excess of joy.'

Delhi and other great cities on the Ganges had passed into the hands of the British; a handsome pension was given to the Mogul Emperor and his descendants, who still retained their great title with their palaces and all the pomp of royalty, but were henceforth mere puppets in the hands of the East India Company and the Crown.

One other Mahratta chief, named Holkar, who ruled the province of Indore, had now to be accounted for, and his territory was successfully invaded by General Lake. The Prince was defeated and captured, after becoming insane. Upon his return from this expedition the heat was so intense that British soldiers dropped down like flies. Even in the shade it is said the thermometer exceeded 130° F., and ten to fifteen soldiers were buried every day, having been stricken down on the road by the sun's rays, which fell upon them like flames of fire. The men thus struck turned suddenly giddy, foamed at the mouth, and became lifeless in a moment. To make matters worse, there was very little water, the native sepoys suffering as much as the Europeans. The men marched with their tongues hanging out like dogs, and from those who were sick there came incessant groans for 'Water! water!' One incident of the march which has been recorded shows the sufferings of the men. A sepoy, overcome with heat, offered all the money he had for a single mouthful of the precious liquid. But the water-carrier to whom he cried

out passed on, having only a drop for his master. Then the sepoy, parched and frenzied, turned his musket to his head and blew out his brains.

Lord William Bentinck, Governor-General between 1828 and 1834, was a judicious reformer who left a lasting influence in India and did splendid work for the Empire. One of his most important reforms in Government was to entrust the less important tasks of offices to the natives themselves. Fifty years of British rule had done much to raise the native standard, and Bentinck wisely judged the time had come to trust the best of them under European supervision, and to relieve British officials of much routine work in Government departments.

This measure was very popular with the Hindus, who valued the trust reposed in them, and fulfilled it faithfully. Bentinck's good terms with the natives helped him in his endeavour to suppress those two horrible elements in native society—the Thugs and the practice of suttee. The Thugs were a fanatical and murderous society which had been the terror of previous Governments and of the natives themselves, but Bentinck, by enlisting the cooperation of several native States, succeeded in strangling this extraordinary religious sect.

But suttee was more difficult to root out, for it had been an immemorial custom for widows to be burnt on their husbands' funeral pyres, with the willing consent of the victims, and the practice received the warm sanction of the high-caste natives. However, by judicious firmness this evil was practically abolished, though even now an Indian widow, no matter how young, is relegated to a life of drudgery and social ostracism which makes many of them value death more than life.

In 1835 English became the official language of India, and as a recent writer has well said, 'the brains as well as the swords of India were placed at the disposal of the British Government.' The numerous Eastern languages, which acted as barriers to the transmission of thought, were superseded by

a language which contained all the riches of European literature and science, and Eastern minds, more subtle than those of the West, were now strengthened and developed through the medium of the English tongue. From that day to this we have never lacked fine native intellects for our Civil Service, and the Indian Renaissance is a remarkable chapter in the world's history.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE STORY OF A GREAT TRAGEDY

AT the commencement of Queen Victoria's reign we had to undertake some serious fighting in Northern India with the native races who had not yet been brought within the sphere of our influence.

In 1838 occurred the first Afghan War, succeeded by a second in 1841-1842, which will always be remembered for one of the greatest disasters that ever befell a British army.

The attempt to occupy Afghanistan was an act of aggression for which Lord Auckland, the Governor-General of India at that time, has been severely blamed. The Ameer or ruler of that great race of fighting-men was Dost Mohammed, who had usurped the throne from a former dynasty whose chief representative, named Shah Shujah, was under British protection. Lord Auckland's scheme was to dispossess the reigning Ameer, and to place Shah Shujah on the throne. A strong army of 9,500 men advanced into the heart of Afghanistan, and captured Kabul, where Sir Alexander Burnes was placed as Resident. Dost Mohammed was taken prisoner, and with great pomp Shah Shujah was given the title of Ameer. For nearly two years the British occupied the country, and Sir William Macnaghten and General Elphinstone endeavoured to strengthen our position and to reconcile the Afghans to our rule. But these native people had no love for the English,

and deeply resented the deposition of Dost Mohammed, while the son of that Prince, Akbar Khan, was constantly intriguing to obtain the reins of power and to crush the British forces. Several warnings reached the Resident at Kabul, Sir Alexander Burnes, that a revolt was in preparation. But Sir William Macnaghten, the British Envoy, an obstinate and self-opinionated man with great and far-reaching ambitions, but blind to the dangers of his position, ignored the rumours and left the Resident unprotected. Then one morning the storm broke, and the house of Sir Alexander Burnes was surrounded by a furious mob of Afghans yelling for his blood. Stepping out on to the verandah, this brave man forbade his own sepoy to fire, and demanded to know the wishes of the insurgents. The answer was a shot which killed a young English lieutenant by his side. Then they set fire to the stables and stormed his house. Burnes offered large sums of money if they would spare this little household and guards, but the only reply was a yell of 'Come down into the garden!'

Burnes, trusting to a Mohammedan, who swore a solemn oath on the Koran to save him, disguised himself in native dress and endeavoured to get through the mob to call for a rescue from Macnaghten. But no sooner had he accompanied his guide to the threshold of the doorway than the treacherous native cried out: 'This is Secundar Burnes, Sahib!' Instantly the mob rushed at him with their long knives, and the poor gentleman was hacked to pieces. Then they broke into the Residency, and the loyal sepoy who stood faithfully by their posts were overpowered and murdered, as well as every man, woman, and child of the household.

The news of this ghastly tragedy reached Macnaghten and General Elphinstone, who were in the cantonments round Kabul. After considerable vacillation they advanced upon the enemy, who were now posted on the heights, and were pouring a destructive fire into the English camp. An officer named Colonel Shefton led a column of sepoy to storm the position, but they were badly damaged by the forces under Akbar.

Khan, and, losing their nerve, retreated to the main army. Eventually, however, Shelton rallied them, and led them to the charge again, when the tables were turned, and Akbar Khan's Afghans were pressed back. A treaty was now arranged by which the British Envoy, Macnaghten, agreed to evacuate all the forts of Afghanistan, to liberate Akbar's father, Dost Mohammed, and to retreat with the whole army to India—not a very honourable treaty for any British representative or General.

Unfortunately, however dishonourable it might be, the treaty was observed still less honourably, and Macnaghten, regretting his promise to abandon the forts captured at such a heavy cost, and wishing to postpone his retreat by fair means or foul, entered into a secret correspondence with Akbar Khan, who, with a cunning pretence of treachery to his own people and his father's cause, made the following proposals: That the British troops should be joined by himself, with his own immediate followers, and that together they should attack the fort and seize the leader of the insurgents; that Shah Shujah should still occupy the throne, and that Akbar Khan, in recompense for his services, should be made Prime Minister of Afghanistan, with a handsome allowance from the British Government.

The offer was obviously a trap, and Macnaghten was told so by his officers when he revealed the correspondence to them. But the Envoy was blinded by his own conceit, and persisted in continuing these negotiations. On the following day Akbar Khan sent a message to Macnaghten asking him to come, with only three officers, to attend a private conference. With incredible rashness the Envoy accepted the invitation, and set off with Colonels Lawrence and Trevor, and Captain Mackenzie, taking with him a beautiful Arab horse as a present to the Afghan chief.

Akbar came riding out to meet them, surrounded with a cavalcade of officers, and, having dismounted, both parties sat on the ground and conversed for a few minutes in a friendly

manner. Suddenly, however, Colonel Lawrence, who had all along suspected treachery, saw that they were being surrounded by Afghans, who were stealing closer on every side. He raised the alarm, but at that moment Akbar Khan threw off all disguise and proclaimed the English officers as his prisoners. Macnaghten and his comrades jumped up and endeavoured to escape, but Lawrence, Trevor, and Mackenzie were seized from behind by lithe arms, and, placed on horseback behind mounted chiefs, were galloped off to the fort.

Macnaghten himself resisted desperately, with a look of horror and anguish on his face that was never forgotten by his friends who had seen it. His struggles were so violent that Akbar Khan became enraged, and, pulling a pistol from his sash, blew out the brains of the brave gentleman, whose rashness had brought him to this tragic end.

General Elphinstone, after this ghastly business, was compelled to carry out the original agreement of retreat, and Akbar Khan gave his solemn promise that they should be protected from the Afghan tribes upon their march to Jelalabad, where they were to join the garrison of that city *en route* to British territory. In return for this condition he demanded the surrender of his guns, and poor Elphinstone, who had lost his nerve, agreed to this humiliating and disastrous stipulation. The loss of their guns depressed the spirits of every sepoy in his army, and they set off upon the long retreat with gloomy presentiments of the fate in store for them.

They began their march in the evening, and, as darkness came on, encamped on the river opposite Kabul fort. It was bitterly cold, and the sepoys, who came from the hot plains of India, were chilled to the bone. 'The night was one of suffering and horror. The snow lay deep on the ground. There was no order, no method in anything that was done. The different regiments encamped anywhere. Soldiers and camp-followers were huddled together in one inextricable mass of suffering humanity. Horses, camels, and baggage-ponies were

mixed up confusedly with them. Nothing had been done to render more endurable the rigour of the northern winter. The weary wretches lay down to sleep—some never rose again; others awoke to find themselves crippled for life. The morning dawned, and without any orders, without any attempt to restrain them, the camp-followers and baggage struggled on ahead, and many of the sepoys went with them. Discipline was fast disappearing. It was no longer a retreating army; it was a rabble in chaotic flight.' Then masses of Afghan horsemen swept down on the rear-guard, which was unable to resist their onslaught, and the line of retreat was marked by heaps of mutilated corpses. For a time the massacre was stopped by Akbar Khan, who came down with 600 horsemen and again offered his protection as far as he was able to restrain the bloodthirsty patriotism of his own people.

He offered to take charge of the ladies and children, and General Elphinstone, eager to remove them from the horrors they had already witnessed, decided to accept this invitation. The officers' wives and their little ones left with tears and pitiful grief, in the deepest anxiety for the fate of those they loved. Then the remnants of the army struggled on. Sepoys fell down in the snow at every step and were frozen to death; others were so frost-bitten that they could not hold a musket. Many deserted to the enemy, to be murdered in cold blood; hundreds were cut down by the Afghan horsemen, who still hung upon the flanks of the retreating rabble, plunging at intervals into the thick of them and slaughtering them like sheep with their long knives. Reaching some ruined walls at a place called Jagdulluk, they obtained a temporary shelter, reduced by this time to about 450 men out of the 16,000 who had set out from the cantonments at Kabul. They had previously refused an offer of Akbar Khan to spare their lives, provided they laid down their arms and surrendered to his mercy. Now General Elphinstone sent once more to the Afghan chief with an appeal to his generosity. He sent an assuring answer, and invited the General, with Colonel

Shelton and Captain Johnstone, to a parley. They went, with a misgiving that was wholly justified, for immediately upon their arrival he intimated that they must remain as his hostages, owing to the fact that Jelalabad had not been evacuated according to the treaty. General Elphinstone begged hard that he, at least, might return to his men to lead them in their retreat, but Akbar was inexorable.

Finding that their officers did not return, the survivors of this awful chapter of disaster struggled on towards Jelalabad. They had to climb a steep hill-path called the Jagdulluk Pass, and when they arrived at the summit at about nine o'clock in the evening they found themselves facing a horde of Afghans, ambushed behind a barricade of fallen trees and bushes. Volley after volley poured into them, and though they sold their lives dearly, they were almost annihilated. Only twenty officers and forty-five men escaped. These were intercepted further along the road, and again a fight took place, which reduced their numbers to seven officers and five privates. Still the survivors pressed on, starving and frost-bitten, and weak from wounds, comrades lying down to die at every mile, until at last when they reached the town of Futtehabad six only remained alive. Jelalabad was now in sight, and it seemed as if, after all their agony, deliverance was at hand. Some peasants came out and gave them food, but as they were recruiting their exhausted strength a party of Afghan horsemen appeared on the plain and charged them furiously. The Englishmen jumped on their starved and stumbling horses, but they were quickly overtaken and, with the exception of one man, were cut down by their ruthless enemy.

That evening the sentries on the ramparts of Jelalabad saw a solitary horseman riding across the dusty plain. He was evidently an Englishman and in sore plight. His head drooped upon his horse's head, his arms hung down limply, and with a free rein the horse, a living skeleton with its poor ribs showing through the skin, staggered forward to the fort. The strange

spectacle caused the utmost astonishment and anxiety to the garrison, and a party of cavalry went out to meet the stranger and inquire his news. Then they recognised him as a gentleman named Dr. Brydom, and in a little while he gasped out the whole horrible story of that annihilation of 16,000 men who eleven days before had set out from Kabul, and of whom he was the sole survivor. Never before and never since has a British army been destroyed so utterly, and the episode remains as one of the greatest tragedies in the history of the world.

To retrieve this unparalleled disaster General Pollock was sent to Afghanistan in the following September (1842) with a strong British column, and punished the Afghan tribes for their bloodthirsty massacre. The English ladies and children who had remained prisoners in the hands of Akbar Khan were liberated, and eventually Dost Mohammed was allowed to resume his power and title as Ameer after promising to keep his people in peace with British India. That promise, as we shall see later, was not kept for very long, and we had some hard fighting with them at a later date.

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE CONQUEST OF THE PUNJAB

IN the following year we had trouble in North-West India, and annexed the State of Sinde, belonging to a strong nation of religious fanatics called Sikhs. A young and warlike chieftain named Ranjit Singh converted them into a powerful military confederacy, and at his death he left an army of 124,000 men, animated by martial spirit and inspired by religious enthusiasm. But there was none among his immediate descendants capable of taking up the sceptre he let fall, and wielding it with the same energy and skill. Amid the anarchy that followed his death the soldiers of his armies clamoured to be led against

the forces of the British, and accordingly in December, 1845, they crossed the river Sutlej and invaded our territory.

Sir Henry Hardinge, attacked by a nation of the best warriors in India, had to fight a series of desperate battles, which won only a temporary peace, during which the Kashmir Province was detached from Sikh rule and placed under British suzerainty.

When Sir Henry Hardinge left India he assured his successor that 'it would not be necessary to fire a gun in India for seven years to come.' But he was mistaken, and only three months after the arrival of the Marquis of Dalhousie—who, fortunately for the Empire, succeeded as Governor-General—the Punjab was again aflame with the second Sikh War of 1848-1849.

Lord Gough, the Commander-in-Chief, was not fitted for his post, and on several occasions, by his lack of judgment, brought great danger upon the Empire. But he blundered through, and at last retrieved his former laxity at the Battle of Gujerat, when, with stubborn ding-dong fighting, he broke up and shattered the massed Sikh armies. The enemy had invited the assistance of the Afghans, but they arrived too late in the day, and three weeks after the great battle, when the last Sikhs had piled their arms in front of the British line, it is said they almost forgot their defeat in delighted laughter as they heard of the laggards from Afghanistan, 'who had ridden like lions out of their hills, only to be hunted back into them at the lance-point like curs.' The Sikh soldiers, who had been fierce but gallant foes, were proud to be enlisted in the ranks of the army that had so well beaten them; and these new troops became the backbone of our Indian army, and did splendid service for the Empire, being staunch during the time of the Mutiny, fighting side by side with British troops.

The conquest of the Punjab was followed by an era of noble administration under Dalhousie and his great subordinates John and Henry Lawrence and John Nicholson. The mass of the nation was disarmed, the turbulent rulers made powerless,

the frontiers protected, roads built, and canals dug, so that this last British conquest became the most prosperous and most loyal of our Indian possessions.

General John Nicholson, mentioned above, was one of the most remarkable soldiers Great Britain has produced. As Commissioner of the Punjab he made his name feared and renowned throughout that country. 'Nikalsain!' exclaimed a border chief, speaking to a British General of the terror excited among evildoers by Nicholson's severity in repressing crime—'Nikalsain! He is a man! There is not one in the hills who does not tremble in his shoes when his name is mentioned.' 'To this day,' said another chief, speaking twelve years after Nicholson's death, 'our women at night wake trembling, and saying they hear the tramp of Nicholson's war-horse.'

A great stalwart Irishman, with the fiery temper of his race, there was one thing on earth his great heart hated and despised, namely, a coward. In one of the battles fought by Lord Gough against the Sikhs Nicholson noticed an officer 'funking' the enemy's fire. Boiling with rage, he went up to the man, and, taking him by the shoulders, kicked him unmercifully into the hottest of the firing.

Another example may be given of his rough-and-ready methods. Shortly after he entered the Punjab as Commissioner he received a deputation of the border chiefs who had not yet given in their submission. These men behaved and spoke with the utmost insolence, and at last one of them spat on the ground when Nicholson was speaking as a deliberate insult to him. This was more than the Irish General's small stock of patience could submit to. 'Orderly!' he roared like a lion, 'make that man lick up his spittle, and kick him out of the camp!' The orderly grappled with the chief, and, before he could resist, was holding him in an iron grip, with his nose wiping the ground, and not until he had fulfilled the Commissioner's command was he put on his feet again. The sternness and promptness of his judgment impressed the other

chiefs very favourably, and they laughed riotously at their disgraced comrade, behaving afterwards much more civilly to the lion-hearted General whose word was law.

On another occasion, when Nicholson was riding through a village with an escort of mounted police, he noticed that, while all the other people saluted him respectfully, one old 'mullah,' or priest, remained sitting in front of his mosque, scowling with vindictive face, and muttering curses in his beard.

Nicholson reined up his horse. 'Bring that mullah to my camp,' he said to his police. There he taught the natives the lesson that there must be no scowling or muttering at the representative of Victoria, the girl-Queen of the British Empire, by cutting off the beard of that mullah—the most shameful thing which, in the opinion of the natives, could possibly happen to a holy priest.

Nevertheless, stern, and sometimes a little brutal, as he was when he considered such a sharp lesson to be necessary, his large heart was filled with kindness which endeared him to his soldiers. Few men were more lamented than John Nicholson when he fell among the storming parties at Delhi during the great tragedy that must be narrated later.

In 1852-1853 came war in Burma, which ended in its permanent annexation. Then followed the policy of making the British power paramount over the native States in India when they became kingless on the death of rulers with no direct descendants, and also over those whose rulers showed themselves incompetent or tyrannous.

The King of Oudh, the most abandoned of native potentates, was warned four times between 1831 and 1849 that if the anarchy and misrule of his territory continued the British Government would take over the kingdom. He failed to profit by these warnings, and one of Dalhousie's last acts, sanctioned, of course, by the home Government, was to depose the wretched creature.

Dalhousie did a splendid and glorious work in the consolida-

tion of the Empire. He opened up the interior by roads and canals, established ports, surveyed the coasts, and improved the harbours. He built the first railways, introduced cheap postage, and covered India with a network of telegraph-wires, while he encouraged education, and trained a body of men who should carry on this work, animated by his own ideals, and according to his own business capacity. Modern India is in itself a memorial of Dalhousie's greatness.

CHAPTER XL

THE INDIAN MUTINY

IN 1857 the progress and peace of our Indian Empire was interrupted by a frightful episode, which even now, when the memory of its horrors have been partly obliterated by time, can hardly be thought of without a shudder. It is not, indeed, good to linger too much on the terrible details of the Indian Mutiny, and it is better rather to dwell with admiration and gratitude on the many heroic deeds it occasioned.

The origin of this great mutiny among the sepoy's employed in the Indian army may not be traced to one cause only. There were many influences at work to undermine the loyalty of the troops. The sons of the Mogul Emperor, whose power had been completely taken over by the British Government, had for a long time been intriguing among the native soldiers, appealing to their patriotism and fanaticism to recover the ancient power of the Hindu dynasty, and to destroy their English masters. At that time also the Bengal native army was very badly organized. Discipline was slack, and the sepoy's so vastly outnumbered the Europeans, that they were not slow to realize their power. They had been trained in the science of war, they were well armed, and they thought that, if they could turn the English guns against their own officers, India would easily be theirs.

The immediate cause of the revolt was the fact that greased cartridges were served out to the Hindu and Mohammedan soldiers, who considered it a defilement to touch the produce of the sacred cow on the one hand, or of the unclean swine on the other.

In February of 1857 a suspicious fact was reported by an English officer. A native policeman had come to the head of a village bringing six little cakes, called chepatties, made of Indian corn, the ordinary bread of the sepoys. 'You will make six others,' said the man, 'and pass them on to the next village, and tell the headman there to do the same.'

In a little while these six little cakes went the round of the whole of the North-West territories, but no one guessed the meaning of the message they conveyed. Some shrewd Englishmen were alarmed at these mysterious tokens, and endeavoured to get to the bottom of the secret. But they were laughed at for their pains, and none of the authorities paid any attention to the matter. In spite of various petty mutinies in the past, the British officers had a complete trust in the loyalty of their men, and they were taken wholly by surprise when, in the spring of that year, the troops broke out in open mutiny. Regiment after regiment rose against its officers, hundreds of British men, women, and children were ruthlessly murdered, and all over Northern India little garrisons of Europeans were besieged by thousands of mutineers lusting for their blood.

The story of those brave little bands defending themselves against overpowering numbers, suffering agonies of heat, thirst, and disease, with their comrades, wives, and children lying dead or wounded around them, is one of the most heroic and most terrible in our history. The indomitable courage of the men was only surpassed by the noble endurance of the women.

One of the most awful tragedies of the Mutiny was at Cawnpore. This town, on the right bank of the Ganges, contained 1,000 Europeans, of whom 560 were children. The

native troops here were among the first to revolt. The Europeans under the command of Sir Hugh Wheeler and Captain Moore managed to hastily entrench themselves with the women and children, and to keep the mutineers at bay.

For twenty days they were besieged by the infamous scoundrel named Nana Sahib and the army of sepoys. The suffering endured by the garrison passes all description. The heat was intense, and the supply of water so limited that not a drop could be spared for cleanliness. Even the little that could be obtained for drinking purposes had to be fetched from the well at a great risk of life from the enemy's fire.

John M'Gillop, a gentleman in the Civil Service, earned an undying glory by constituting himself 'Captain of the Well.' Under the incessant fire of the enemy he went to the well again and again to fetch water for the parched women and children. When at last he fell, mortally wounded, his dying words were an entreaty for someone to draw water for a lady to whom he had promised it. For twenty days 10,000 men raged round the little force. But each man in the garrison knew that he was fighting for those dearest to him, and the mutineers suffered heavy losses at the hands of this band of heroes, worn with hunger, thirst, disease, and wounds.

At length, when the garrison was almost at its gasp, Nana Sahib, who knew that help was at hand, determined to get the British into his hands by a diabolical act of treachery. He said that if they would lay down their arms he would give them a safe passage down the Ganges to Allahabad. With sore misgivings the garrison accepted the terms, and staggered out of their bravely held entrenchments. They found boats at their disposal, but no sooner had they embarked than the natives opened a murderous fire upon them. Only four men escaped, and 125 women and children were carried back to Cawnpore to suffer a more terrible fate.

While the brave garrison had been defending itself against the enemy, a British General—Sir Henry Havelock, of deathless fame—was fighting his way through the mutineers

to come to its relief. But he arrived too late. He fought battle upon battle with thousands and tens of thousands of the sepoys, and defeated them again and again. At last he managed to force his way into Cawnpore; but he found to his horror that not one of the garrison remained, and that the women and children had been foully murdered and cast into a well.

The story is told that when the 78th Highlanders, or Seaforths, removed the mutilated remains of these poor ladies and their little ones, they came across the body of Miss Wheeler, the daughter of Sir Hugh Wheeler, who had commanded the garrison and had perished with his comrades. The sight of the young girl's remains so enraged the Highlanders, who had a soldiers' love for her father, that they cut the hair from her head, and distributing it among the regiment, swore that for each hair a rebel should die. In the battles fought by the 78th on their way to the Relief of Lucknow, it was remarked that their valour and ferocity was astonishing, and many Victoria Crosses fell to these Seaforths.

Lucknow itself is another name for ever associated with the tragedy of the Mutiny. Here in the Residency another British garrison defended it against thousands of bloodthirsty enemies. Sir Henry Lawrence—one of that noble Lawrence family to whom India owes an enduring debt—animated the garrison by his sublime courage and faith until he was struck down by the fragment of a shell. As he lay dying he called together all his officers, and dictated to them the most minute details for the defence. His instructions were taken down in writing, and at the conclusion of this memorable document he directed that the inscription on his tomb should be: 'Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty. May God have mercy on him.' His death was a severe blow to the defenders of the Residency, but his place was taken by the brave Brigadier Inglis, who kept up the courage of the garrison, and repelled every effort of the enemy until help arrived.

While they had been holding out Generals Havelock and Outram were fighting their way through to them. Outram, as a senior in command, had the right to conduct the campaign, but with splendid self-sacrifice and chivalry, he waived his rank in favour of his old comrade-in-arms, Sir Henry Havelock, who had been first in the field.

In after-years Outram is said to have regretted his action as a 'foolish thing,' and said that 'sentiment had obscured his sense of duty. Every man, he thought, should carry out the task assigned to him.' Nevertheless, the British people will always look upon his generosity to Havelock as one of the most beautiful acts of all his noble and chivalrous career.

The defenders of the Residency had sustained a siege against overpowering odds for 113 days before Havelock and Outram fought their way through the mutineers and entered the town.

One of the most gallant actions of the historic siege is worth recording and remembering. During the course of it the mutineers dragged two guns to the top of a flat roof of a palace near the Residency, and it was obvious that they would be able to pour down a destructive fire which would soon shatter the only retreat of the British garrison. It was necessary to prevent them from being fired at all costs. A non-commissioned officer named Sergeant Halliwell, the crack shot of the 32nd Regiment, volunteered to defeat the enemy's project. Taking an ample supply of ammunition and his trusty rifle, he crept over the Residency roof and sheltered himself behind some crumbling masonry. Here for several days he remained in a cramped position, his only change of movement being to roll over from his stomach on to his back, unable to stand up, as he would have been shot at once. But from this vantage-point he picked off gunner after gunner before they could do any damage, and at last they abandoned such a dangerous and deadly position. For this plucky service Sergeant Halliwell received the Victoria Cross which was richly deserved.

The scene which occurred between the brave garrison and

the forces which had come to relieve it was one of intense pathos. A gentleman who was in the Residency has thus described it:

‘The Highlanders stopped everyone they met, and with repeated questions and exclamations of “Are you one of them? God bless you! We thought to have found only your bones!” bore them back towards Dr. Fayrer’s house, into which the General had entered. Here a scene of thrilling interest presented itself. The ladies of that garrison, with their children, had assembled in the most intense anxiety and excitement under the porch outside when the Highlanders approached. Rushing forward, the rough and bearded soldiers shook the ladies by the hand amidst loud and repeated congratulations. They took the children up in their arms, and fondly caressing them handed them from one to another to be caressed in turn.’

Still, however, the position of the garrison was very perilous. Fresh reinforcements of rebel sepoys were constantly arriving, and they kept up an incessant attack.

During the second siege Sir Henry Havelock, worn out by fatigue and weakened by dysentery, followed his old friend, Lawrence, to the grave. He was tended during his illness by his son, allowing no one else to attend to his wants. To the last he kept on saying, ‘I die happy and contented,’ and when his comrade, Sir James Outram, called on him, he said: ‘I have for forty years so ruled my life that when death came I might face it without fear.’ As the end approached he called to his son and said: ‘See how a Christian can die!’ Then with a smile he fell backward, and in a little while his noble spirit was at rest. He was dead before the news came that Queen Victoria had conferred a baronetcy upon him, but the title descended to the son who had nursed him, and the second Sir Henry Havelock won the Victoria Cross, and died as bravely as his father could have wished on the Indian Frontier as late as 1898.

Delhi, the city of lovely palaces and gorgeous mosques, and the capital of the Mogul Emperors, is another town round

which will ever cling the memory of the Mutiny. When the native forces revolted they slew nearly every British man, woman, and child, until the streets ran red with blood. In this city was a large powder magazine, containing over 1,000 barrels of gunpowder. This was valiantly defended by a little band of nine British officers, chief among whom was the gallant Willoughby. It was of supreme importance to India that the powder should not fall into the hands of the enemy, and the party of nine were fully aware of their responsibility. Rather than yield it up to the mutineers they were determined to blow up the mine and themselves with it. For nine hours the heroic little band held their own against the yelling crowd of murderers. At last two of them were killed and all wounded.

The end was near. Lieutenant Willoughby calmly raised his hat. It was the signal for one of his companions to fire the mine. In a moment there was a terrific explosion. The building was rent asunder, and the ruins fell upon the horror-stricken natives. Many hundreds were buried alive. Willoughby and his five companions were horribly burnt and bruised, but they managed to escape alive. Four of them survived the Mutiny and received the Victoria Cross, but the gallant Willoughby and one of his companions were killed shortly afterwards.

The mutineers were now in complete possession of Delhi, and this became the headquarters of the revolt. From all parts of India the rebels made their way to swell the ranks of the army of traitors. The British forces, reinforced by regiment after regiment of loyal Sikhs—those former enemies who were now such splendid friends—strained every nerve to capture the stronghold, and it was during the siege of this city that some of the finest deeds of heroism were enacted which brighten this terrible page of our country's history.

It was before Delhi that the famous exploit took place of blowing up the Cashmere Gate. In broad daylight, and in the full face of the enemy's fire, a little party, commanded by Lieutenants Howe and Salkeld, sallied over the drawbridge to

blow up the great gate of Delhi, or to perish in the attempt. They were laden with heavy bags of gunpowder, which they deliberately piled against the gate. Man after man fell, riddled by the enemy's shot, but man after man carried on the work calmly and fearlessly.

At last the fuse was well alight. In another moment there was an awful explosion. The huge gates were shattered to fragments, and at the same time little Bugler Hawthorn rang out the heart-stirring charge, which called to his comrades to dash up and show the mutineers a specimen of British pluck. With desperate fighting Delhi was taken after a siege of fifteen weeks, and when this stronghold of the Mutiny fell into our hands our greatest fears for the safety of the Empire in India were at an end. Among the first to enter the city of the Moguls was a young lieutenant named Frederic Roberts, who was afterwards to be the best-beloved General of the British Army, the hero of the march to Kandahar, the victor of many a hard-fought battle in Afghanistan, and saviour of British prestige in the dark days of the South African War. 'Little Bobs,' as he was called, was staff officer to Brigadier Sir Neville Chamberlain, who had advanced with a column of native troops to the relief of Delhi. On the way some of the soldiers revolted, and in his book of memoirs Lord Roberts has described the awful punishment with which they were rewarded for their treachery.

'Chamberlain decided that they should be blown away from the guns in the presence of their own comrades, as being the most awe-inspiring means of carrying the sentence into effect. A parade was at once ordered. The troops were drawn up so as to form three sides of a square; on the fourth side were two guns. As the prisoners were being brought to the parade, one of them asked him if they were going to be blown from the guns to which they were bound, and one requested that some rupees he had on his person might be saved for his relations. The Brigadier answered, "It is too late!"

'The word of command was given; the guns went off instan-

taneously, and the two mutineers were launched into eternity. It was a terrible sight, and one likely to haunt the beholder for many a long day; but that was what was intended. I carefully noted the sepoys' faces to see how it affected them. They were evidently startled at the swift retribution which had overtaken their comrades, but looked more crestfallen than shocked or horrified, and we soon learnt that their determination to mutiny and make the best of their way to Delhi was in no wise changed by the scene they had witnessed.'

Among the other young officers who entered Delhi after the siege was Hodson, of Hodson's Horse, renowned for his dare-devil courage. This gallant fellow hunted down the King of Delhi, who was in hiding, and at last captured him as he came out of one of the palaces in a bullock-carriage. The last of the Mogul Emperors asked for a pledge that his life should be spared. 'All right,' said Hodson; 'but,' he added grimly, 'I will shoot you like a dog if there is any attempt at rescue.' Then, quite alone, riding by the side of the bullock-carriage, in advance of his escort of fifty horsemen, the young soldier made his way through the city at foot-pace, followed by thousands of natives gazing with awe and astonishment at the 'officer sahib' carrying off the King. When they reached the Lahore Gate the officer on duty said, 'What have you got in that palkee?' 'Only the King of Delhi!' said Hodson calmly. Then, moving up the Silver Bazaar street to the gates of the Imperial Palace, Hodson handed over his prisoner to the civil authority. 'By Jove, Hodson,' said that personage, 'they ought to make you Commander-in-Chief for this!' However, when the young officer made his report to General Wilson, that gruff old soldier only muttered ungraciously enough, 'Well, I'm glad you've got him, but I never expected to see either you or him again.'

After this exploit Hodson set out in search of the Emperor's two sons, who had been doubly dyed in treachery, and were the chief instigators of the Mutiny. He came up with them as they were hiding by the tomb of Humayun, and when they

refused his demand to surrender, shot them both immediately, with a characteristic dislike for standing on ceremony.

Gradually, by the splendid services of Sir Colin Campbell, Outram, and other Generals and officers, every man of whom was animated with a high sense of duty and unfailing courage, the Mutiny was quelled, and by administration and stern, strong measures peace was restored to India. Horrible as it had been, it taught us many valuable lessons. In the first place, it had been a soldiers' mutiny merely. The people of India had taken no part in it, standing neutral and watching the course of its violence with sullen and unsympathetic eyes. They were satisfied with British rule and British justice. Secondly, it taught the British Government that the East India Company, which had done good work in its time, had outlived its vocation, and could no longer be allowed to govern India through its Board of Directors and officials. On November 1, 1858, all power was taken from it, and old 'John Company' died a natural death when Queen Victoria was proclaimed Sovereign of India—taking the title of Empress—in 1876. Our army was reorganized, and at the present time the Indian native troops are in a high state of efficiency, and their loyalty may be absolutely relied on, though never again will they be allowed to have such supreme command of the arsenals and guns, or to be in such a dangerous majority over the English regiments in India.

With the British Crown as sole authority, India now became a part of the Empire in name as well as fact. Lord Canning, a calm and just man on the pattern of an old Roman Consul, became first Viceroy, and he gave justice to India instead of the vengeance clamoured for by some who were maddened by the atrocities of the Mutiny.

'I will not govern in anger,' he wrote. 'Justice, and that as stern, as inflexible, as law and might can make it, I will deal out. But I will never allow an angry or incriminating act or word to proceed from the Government of India as long as I am responsible for it.'

Since 1858 the administration of India has been regulated by Acts of Parliament. Local legislation is entrusted to the Council of India, but the Budget and general enactments are subject to special approval. The executive responsibility is borne by the Secretary of State, as a member of the British Cabinet, and therefore controlled by Parliament. He is advised by a council of not less than ten persons, holding office for ten years, not subject to political change, who must have been not less than ten years in public employ in India.

The Viceroy, who resides in Calcutta, is appointed by the Crown, and represents the Emperor. As such he is nominally the absolute executive authority in India, but, as a matter of fact, is subordinate to the Secretary of State. He is aided by a consultative council of seven persons and a legislative council, consisting of the former members, with six to twelve additional nominees. Under certain conditions this council exercises complete local power. Under this form of rule India has steadily progressed in prosperity, and reforms in domestic conditions have aided agriculture and industry, so that the advancement in both these pursuits has been very great.

In 1878-1880 the integrity of the Empire had to be maintained at the cost of bloodshed in Afghanistan, whose ruler, Shere Ali, was conspiring against us with Russia. General Roberts, in command of the British forces, avenged a defeat at Maiwand and the massacre of the Resident and his household, after a brilliant march of 300 miles to Kandahar through a hostile country. Abdur Rahman, the nephew of Shere Ali, was given the throne, left vacant by the latter's flight and death. An enlightened man and a strong ruler, he remained consistently loyal to us, in spite of occasional moods of bad temper, and upon his death, a few years ago, his son, Habibullah Khan, succeeded him peacefully, and pledged his allegiance to the British Crown.

Men of British blood may well be proud of their country's

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work in India. We have made it ours by wise government and unselfish justice, as well as by right of conquest, opening up vast markets to British trade and enterprise, and gaining in support of British world-supremacy 286,000,000 of loyal people, or, in other words, one-sixth of the whole population of the world

PART VI

THE STORY OF AUSTRALIA

CHAPTER XLI

THE DISCOVERY

ALTHOUGH the English were the first people to form a colony in the great island continent of Australia, and no other nation has ever had a share of its soil, it is to Spanish and Portuguese seamen that the honour belongs of having led the way to the islands of the Southern Seas. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as we have already seen in the first part of this book, Spain and Portugal produced the most daring and skilful navigators of the world. They were the makers of modern geography, and they were encouraged by Princes like Henry of Portugal and Ferdinand of Spain, who were always ready to reward the discoverers of new lands. The romance of exploration had dominated the imagination of those two nations at a time when English seamen were content to take their ships over well-known trading routes and had no ambition to sail into unknown seas. Nor were they content only to record the actual discoveries of their navigators. The cartographers and men of science were always working out new theories as to what lands might lie behind the veil; and although their bold speculations were often wildly erroneous, their flights of fancy being of an unrestricted nature, there is no doubt that they led to many valuable discoveries.

One of the great dreams which haunted the imagination of those early geographers was the presence of a Great South

Land stretching upwards from the Southern Pole to the fortieth degree in one vast continent. Innumerable legends grew up in connection with this vision of an unknown land. Romance writers, building upon the scientific theories of the map-makers, boldly asserted that a nation of highly-civilized white people dwelt in this Great South Land, with cities more magnificent than those of ancient Asia, surrounded by natural wealth of spices and luscious fruits and all the rarest gifts of the earth, while beneath the soil itself lay treasure of precious gems and metals more vast than in the gold and diamond mines of South America.

In search of this fabulous region ship after ship set out from Spain and Portugal, ploughing blindly towards the Southern Seas; but although new groups of islands were constantly encountered, no sign or proof could be found of the mysterious continent which was firmly believed to exist. Still, they persevered in the attempt, and not only the seamen of Spain and Portugal, but those of Holland also, vied with each other in daring voyages to the South Pacific, seeking vainly for the Great South Land.

In many cases these gallant navigators did actually sight the island continent of Australia and the sister isles of New Zealand, but by ill-luck they either sailed through straits which they took to be open sea or sailed in and out again of the great Gulf of Carpentaria under the same impression, or, yet again, bewildered by the innumerable islands which had baffled their search for a continent, passed the coast of Australia itself with the idea that it was also a part of the mazy archipelago of the Southern Seas. There is but little doubt that the famous old Portuguese navigator Magellan sailed past the coast of Western Australia in 1522. Later on, in 1606, Luis Vaez de Torres, of Spain, threaded his way with infinite difficulty through the shoals and reefs and island-strewn channels of the straits now called by his name, the Torres Straits, between North Australia and New Guinea. Then Abel Jans Tasman, brave old Dutchman and famous seaman,

was court-martialled, he did not rest until he had been appointed to a new expedition for the South Seas to rescue his old friend. This was successfully accomplished after Selkirk had remained alone for years on his lonely island.

It was not before a long time had passed that any other English seaman sailed in the track of the old buccaneer and completed his explorations of the Australian coast. But the legend of the Great South Land still lingered in the imagination of English geographers, and in 1768 the Royal Society, which then, as now, included the most learned men of science in the nation, decided to make one more attempt to solve the mystery of the South Seas.

Primarily an expedition was equipped to make an astronomical observation from Tahiti, an island in the archipelago of the Society Islands, right in the centre of the Pacific, 1,000 miles north-east of New Zealand and 3,400 miles south-west of San Francisco; but Lieutenant James Cook, who was put in command of the expedition, was instructed to proceed, after the observation had been taken, on a southerly course across the Pacific, and to keep a sharp look-out for the long-sought continent called by the old map-makers *Terra Australis*.

The seaman commanding this voyage of exploration, afterwards famous to all the world as the great Captain Cook, was a determined, hard-headed, gallant-hearted man who had carved his way to distinction through many difficulties and disadvantages. The son of an agricultural labourer, he had been apprenticed as a small boy to the proprietor of a small 'all sorts shop' at the Yorkshire fishing village of Staithes. His duties consisted in putting up and taking down the shutters, running errands for his master, sweeping out the shop, and killing the cockroaches which grew fat on the sugar and groceries of Mr. Sanderson's little store. At night he slept in a bunk under the counter. It was not a very enjoyable life for the small drudge, and he had few opportunities for self-education. But he had one source of infinite pleasure and amuse-

ment. Whenever he could sneak off for an hour or two he was to be found in the harbour of the little port listening with eager ears to the spicy yarns of the fishermen and the old salts as they mended their nets or caulked their boats. Some of them had sailed into far seas, had fought with pirates on the Spanish main, and done some buccaneering of their own off the coast of South America.

These sailors' yarns of smuggling and piracy, of desert islands and far lands, were much more interesting to young James Cook than the gossip of his master with the village cronies over the shop-counter. Often, as he stood on the quay gazing away to the horizon, where the masts and rigging of fishing-smacks and trading-ships gleamed with gold, when the sun, dipping into the ocean, turned the low-lying clouds into a mirage of palm-fringed islands, and when the music of the sea rang sweetly in his ears, the boy's soul was filled with a great longing to have done with the all sorts shop and its voluptuous black beetles, and to go out upon the great world of waters.

One morning, when Mr. Sanderson came down to his shop, he found the shutters still up. Young James Cook had answered the call of the sea, and, like Robinson Crusoe, had run away to be a sailor.

For some time he served as cabin-boy in a small merchant-ship belonging to Messrs. Walker, of Whitby, trading between Newcastle and Norway; and, quick to learn the lessons of practical seamanship, he became promoted in the course of years to the proud position of mate.

At this time war broke out between Great Britain and France, and the press-gangs were busy in all the ports of the English coast. To man His Majesty's navy, any likely young fellow who had a knowledge of the sea was seized without scruple by small parties of Jack Tars under the orders of a midshipmite or a second lieutenant, and if he would not come willingly a rap on the head with a marline-spike kept him quiet until he was carried on board a man-of-war. It was not pleasant to be a pressed man; he had a rough time and small

chances of promotion. It was better to volunteer with a good grace, and so thought James Cook, who stepped off his trading-ship as mate and enlisted as able seaman, or 'before the mast,' as it was called, on H.M.S. *Eagle*. He was lucky in two things: he was under the command of a gallant and kind-hearted officer, Captain (afterwards Sir Hugh) Palliser, and his ship formed part of the squadron sent to Canada to effect the capture of Louisbourg.

James Cook succeeded in obtaining special notice from his captain, who gave him lessons in log-keeping and chart-making and the most difficult branches of navigation. For the son of an agricultural labourer, who had received next to no education, it was a remarkable thing to acquire so much difficult knowledge, and it says much for Cook's intelligence that Captain Palliser was able to recommend him to the post of master, or navigating officer, of H.M.S. *Mercury*. In this position James Cook distinguished himself at the siege of Quebec by taking soundings of the St. Lawrence and making a chart for the guidance of the fleet under the most difficult and dangerous circumstances. These services brought him under the favourable notice of the Admiralty, and it was in consequence of them that he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant, and selected to take command of the scientific expedition to the Pacific, and to proceed on a voyage of discovery in the Southern Seas.

It was on June 26, 1768, that Cook left Deptford with his good ship the *Endeavour*, and, with a crew of eighty-five seamen and a party of scientists, including Joseph Banks, the botanist, began a voyage which will always be famous in the history of navigation. It was seven months later, in January of the following year, that they touched at the island of Tahiti, in the South Pacific, from which the astronomical observation was to be taken. It had been a long voyage, and though free from any great disaster, a time of much suffering. Scurvy was the great scourge of seamen in those days owing to their unvarying diet of salt pork and biscuits, and the lack of green

vegetables. Many members of the *Endeavour's* crew were down with the horrible disease, and this rest at the beautiful island of Tahiti, where fresh fruit was to be had for the plucking, was sorely needed by everyone. To those rough sailor-men this Pacific island seemed a little Paradise. The beauty of its scenery was entrancing to the eyes of men so weary of gazing across the vast unbroken ocean. The climate was delightful and refreshing, and the natives were friendly and even hospitable in their simple way. These South Sea islanders were indeed a fine race of savages. The men were tall and handsome, the women beautiful as dusky goddesses, and, naked though they were, there was nothing in their manners that could be objected to in such strong terms as old buccaneering Dampier had passed upon the natives of Australia. It was with genuine regret that Cook and his crew parted from the pleasant island and its primitive people. For some weeks the *Endeavour* cruised about discovering many new islands and groups of islands not previously charted. Then they struck southwards, and for six weeks sailed steadily across the Southern Pacific without once getting a glimpse of land. At last the look-out shouted the grateful news, and there away on the port side could be dimly seen a great range of mountains lying like low clouds upon the horizon. As they came nearer, the sun gleamed upon snow-capped peaks and rocky ridges sloping downwards to great pine forests. It was the first sight of North Island, New Zealand, and Cook headed his vessel for a little cove which offered a safe shelter.

With cheers and cries of joy, the men, stiff after their six weeks' voyage, sprang on to the strand, while Cook searched the land with his telescope. Presently, as the crew were fitting up a camp and getting their provision-chests on shore, they perceived a long line of natives standing motionless on a neighbouring ridge, gazing down upon them with the greatest astonishment, though without any sign of fear. The Englishmen returned their gaze with equal interest, and studied for the first time the characteristics of the New Zealand 'Maoris,'

with whom, in later years, Englishmen were to have many a fierce battle. They were remarkable-looking men, tall, muscular, and well made, except that their legs were rather short in proportion to their bodies, with black or dark brown hair, handsome, clear-cut faces without beards, and wonderfully bright and intelligent eyes. They could not be called black men, for their skins were of a light brown colour—not so dark, indeed, as an inhabitant of Southern Italy—and they carried themselves with a dignity and manliness that was very remarkable in the presence of strangers, whose appearance must have been startling and extraordinary to them. They were armed with short stone clubs, long wooden spears, and oval-shaped shields, which they brandished fiercely as soon as they had recovered from their first astonishment. Cook responded with friendly signs, but as the natives came down with loud war-cries and threatening gestures, he ordered an immediate retreat to the boats. He wisely resolved to do nothing which might be interpreted as a hostile act, and again made signs of friendship and confidence. The native chiefs seemed to hold a counsel, and afterwards made a dumb-show of peace, withdrawing some distance from the shore, and laying down their weapons. Cook and his crew again landed, although they kept their arms ready to fire a volley at any sign of treachery. The Maoris, however, were loyal to their truce, and showed their extreme amiability to the strangers by fingering their property and walking off with everything that particularly struck their fancy. Such affection was a little embarrassing!

Cook soon took to his boats again, and sailed along the coast, making a careful survey of its bays and channels. There were frequent encounters with the natives, some of a friendly kind, but others of a threatening character, in which Cook was reluctantly compelled to use firearms. Generally the din of the muskets was sufficient to scare off the Maori warriors, but in some cases they showed such extreme courage, even before such strange and deadly weapons, that Cook had to order his men to fire into them, though he deeply regretted the few lives

that were taken in this way. At last, having sailed completely round North Island, the *Endeavour* entered Queen Charlotte Sound, on the north coast of South Island. Here the crews were landed, and with an impressive little ceremony the Union Jack was hoisted amid the cheers of the sailors, and Cook formally took possession of the country in the name of King George III.

Then once again the *Endeavour* continued this voyage of exploration, and after nineteen days on the open sea, the lookout sighted a long coast-line, and gave the welcome cry of 'Land, ho!' Cook came out of his cabin where he had been studying his charts, and mounting to his quarter-deck, searched the coast-line with his telescope, and saw for the first time the great island continent of Australia. As they drew near, the steep cliffs forbade any attempt at landing by a great wall of rock, but coasting along, they presently found a pleasant little bay, into which they ran and lay-to. Some time was spent in this safe shelter, and Joseph Banks, the scientist, with a small search party, went ashore, hunting for new specimens of plant-life. The district afforded constant delight and excitement to Banks himself, who continually came across flowers and ferns previously unknown to science. His enthusiasm was so great that there could be no doubt of the best name for the place in which these discoveries had been made, and with Cook's sanction it was entered on the chart as Botany Bay. When the crew had been sufficiently rested and refreshed, the *Endeavour's* sails were again hoisted, and the coasting cruise was continued in a northerly direction. Now and again Cook entered another bay or creek, and gave his men fresh spells on shore while he surveyed the surrounding country for a short distance. Occasionally a little band of natives appeared out of the bush, making hostile demonstrations, or staring at them with the utmost astonishment and awe, as if they were supernatural beings. These savages were nothing like the splendid natives of New Zealand in their physical characteristics. They were smaller, stunted men, with heavy, unintelligent

faces, coarse, ugly features, and a look of mingled ferocity and cunning, very different from the manly and dignified appearance of the Maoris. They were brave enough so long as the sailors kept their muskets quiet, and hurled volleys of spears at the strangers with angry shouts of defiance. But as soon as a few shots were fired above their heads, they tumbled over each other in their almost ludicrous stampede for the shelter of rocks and trees. Now and again, by great forbearance and every show of friendship and kindness, Cook succeeded in gaining their confidence, but the gain was not a great one, for they were worse thieves than the Maoris, and without any sense for keeping faith. They had no sooner satisfied their curiosity, and stolen as much as the sailors would allow without using their 'debbil-sticks,' than the blackfellows crept round at night and fired the dry grass close to the strangers' camp. This burnt with the utmost rapidity, and the lives of Cook and his crew were in grave danger. They had to race for the boats, being fortunate enough to escape a singeing. Such acts of treachery were repeated on several occasions, and the temptation to go ashore was not so great after such unpleasant experiences. Still continuing a northerly course, the *Endeavour* at last rounded Cape York, the extreme point of the northern coast. Here Cook landed on a small island, and the Union Jack was again run up, while the explorer made a little speech. He took possession of the whole eastern part of Australia, which he had explored, on behalf of King George, under the name of New South Wales. This done, Cook, satisfied with the results of his long voyage, made his way home with the good ship *Endeavour*, which had served him so valiantly in fair weather and foul. Touching at New Guinea, he steered for the Cape of Good Hope, and thence to the English Channel, so getting safely back after one of the most famous and valuable voyages in the history of the sea. For his services Cook was given the rank of Captain in the Royal Navy, not a very great reward for a man who had set the Union Jack flying over the greatest islands in the world. Still, he was

proud of this mark of honour from his Government, and he has had as well the greater honour of the British people, not only of his own time, but of succeeding generations. Brave and sturdy man, full of hardihood and dogged perseverance through difficulties and dangers, his name will always be remembered as one of England's worthies. There is no need in this book to relate his subsequent voyages through the icy waters of the South Pacific Ocean, when he proved beyond all doubt the non-existence of the mythical 'Great South Land.' He has given us the narrative of them in his own words, and his books are well worth reading by lovers of adventure and romance. He lost his life at last on the island of Hawaii, in the Pacific Ocean, where he was clubbed to death by treacherous natives.

CHAPTER XLII

THE AUSTRALIAN PIONEERS

THE discovery of the great island continent by Captain Cook naturally aroused the profound interest of our men of science and, to a limited extent, of the public as a whole. But the British Government were strangely backward in making any attempt to found new colonies in this land of promise. At that time they were too much occupied with the great rebellion in North America to turn their attention to Empire-building in another part of the world, and when the American colonists came out victorious from their struggle for independence, the war with France in Europe still taxed the utmost strength and energies of our Ministers. Certainly they went so far as to consider a plan to deport the American loyalists to Australia, and to supply them with prison labour, but this scheme came to nothing, for while arrangements were being made the bulk of the 'United Empire Loyalists,' as they were called, passed over to Canada, and there settled down.

The colonization of Australia depended, therefore, mainly upon individual enterprise and adventure. The most the Government could be induced to do by men like Sir Joseph Banks, who had accompanied Captain Cook on his voyages, was to use the newly-discovered country as a penal colony for convicts. Botany Bay was selected as the most favourable place for such a settlement, but when Captain Arthur Phillip arrived there with the first convict ship, he found its barren soil unsuited for agricultural purposes, and wisely moved further north, and selected the magnificent site upon which the great city of Sydney now stands.

Although the convict labourers, in spite of their turbulence, were useful in building roads and felling trees, the real founders of the commonwealth were the British agriculturists, who, as time went on, arrived in steadily increasing numbers, and, with the same indomitable energy and hardihood that had characterized the pioneers of New England, established prosperous farms and homesteads upon Australian soil.

Their opportunities were increased a hundredfold by the successful adventure of a clever man named John McArthur, who had formerly held a commission in the New South Wales Corps. The idea came to him that the Australian downs as well as its climate were admirably adapted for sheep-rearing, and he had a strong desire to introduce some of the Spanish merinos, which produced the finest qualities of wool. How could he obtain them? Money would not buy them, for not a single sheep of this breed could be exported from Spain under penalty of death. Fortunately, McArthur learnt that a few specimens had been presented as a Royal gift to George III., and he was inspired to write to the King, pointing out to him the enormous effect upon the future of Australia if such sheep could be successfully bred, and appealing for the loan of his animals. This request was granted, and John McArthur had the happiness of successfully rearing a great flock of merino sheep, which thrived amazingly on the pasture-lands of New South Wales.

The success of his experiment induced large numbers of

colonists to follow his example, and in a short time large quantities of excellent wool were sent over to the English markets. The wealth of the Australian sheep-farmers had also an immediate effect upon emigration, and from that time forward there was a steady stream of 'new blood' flowing from the old country to New South Wales.

In 1803, when John McArthur had first tried his experiment, he sent over 245 pounds of wool, but as early as 1820 100,000 pounds were shipped to England, in 1830, 3,500,000 pounds, and in 1840 the amount had increased to 7,000,000 pounds. By that time the fertile country of New South Wales was covered with enormous flocks of sheep, and the constant search for new 'runs' was the means of opening up the unknown interior of the Bush.

The real romance of early Australian life lies in the work of the explorers who, with splendid courage and at the risk of their lives, penetrated the vast and trackless Bush-country, animated partly, no doubt, with that love of discovering the unknown which is in the blood of most brave men, but chiefly with the good and honest purpose of finding new pasture-lands and fertile ground for the sheep-farmer and the agriculturist.

This story of Australian exploration, which must now be briefly told, is as truly heroic, if not more heroic, than any record of glory on the battlefield or of naval warfare.

For about twenty-five years after the first settlement was established at Port Jackson (or Sydney, as the town was called) these early Australian colonists were hemmed in by what for a long time seemed an impassable range of hills. Governor Phillip, exploring to the north of Sydney, had discovered a little river, which he called the Hawkesbury, flowing through a fertile tract of country, afterwards known as the Emu Plains. Some detachments of convicts were drafted to this district and encouraged in agricultural pursuits; but misfortunes dogged the footsteps of the enforced settlers, and a severe drought ruined their crops and parched their cattle, threatening them with starvation.

Meanwhile fresh batches of convicts were constantly arriving from England, and there soon became a really desperate need to push further to the interior for good farming and grazing. But always to the west that long line of rocky heights, which in the distance had a deep bluish haze, from which they were naturally given the name of the Blue Mountains, defied every attempt to extend the convict colonies beyond that boundary. Time after time some daring fellow, with the lust of liberty in his heart, gave the slip to the guards, and struggled to force a track 'over the hills and far away,' but time after time such a man came back, torn, bruised, and emaciated, to take his lashes and tell the story of his desperate adventures on rocky heights above clean-cut precipices that seemed without a pass or ledge that might be crossed by any mortal creature.

Not only were escaped prisoners baffled by the Blue Mountains: the same fate befell the official surveyors sent out by Governor Phillip and his successors with all the advantages of properly-equipped expeditions. They, too, came back despairingly to describe what seemed to them the hopelessly impassable hills blocking their path with enormous sandstone walls, which not even a monkey could scale, rising and falling into jagged, saw-like ridges and rocky valleys at the bottom of sheer precipices, beyond which rose again enormous peaks and vast boulders, grim, forbidding, and unassailable.

At length, in 1814, three adventurous young men named Gregory Blaxland, Lieutenant W. Lawson, and William Charles Wentworth, made a determined resolve to get across the Blue Mountains, if it were humanly possible. They set out from the Emu Plains and scaled one of the highest ridges. Below them were deep gorges, impossible to descend or cross, not only on account of their perilous steepness, but because they formed the beds of rushing little torrents produced during the rainy season. Undaunted, however, they pushed on to the bend of the gorge, forcing their way through tangled bushes and through ravines so narrow that sometimes they

could hardly squeeze through on hands and knees. Up again they went, always endeavouring to keep to the highest ridges. Constantly their hopes of having reached the last chain of rocks were dashed by seeing before them, across a steep valley to which they had painfully won their way, yet another series of sandstone rocks with their deep-cut gorges, precipitous chasms, and knife-like ledges. At last, however, the three resolute men did actually stand upon the westernmost spur of the Blue Mountains, and with unspeakable satisfaction gazed down upon a vista of grassy slopes with a great plain beyond. They had won! The 'impassable' barriers had been crossed, and there before them lay, bathed in sunshine, a land of good hope, destined, surely, for prosperous farms and the fertile pastures of great flocks. Wentworth, Lawson, and Blaxland, the three pioneers of Australian exploration, descended into this 'happy valley' and found a little stream flowing in a westerly direction.

Upon returning to Sydney with their good tidings, they received warm thanks from the new Governor, Lachlan Macquarie, who, during his tenure of office, gave the utmost encouragement to exploration, thereby perpetuating his memory for ever in Australian geography, in which his name is recorded by river and plain. Under his instructions, a Government surveyor named Evans followed up the newly-found route across the mountains, and followed the little stream which had been discovered by the three pioneers. His party refreshed themselves with its water and obtained food from it as well, for a fine catch of fish rewarded their lines. From this pleasant augury to future anglers they called the stream the Fish River. Then, continuing along its banks, they found that it flowed into another and greater river coming from the south. This was named the Macquarie, in honour of the Governor. It wandered through a broad and fertile valley abounding with emus and kangaroos, and this was also called after the Governor by the name of the Macquarie Plains.

These admirable discoveries were immediately followed up

by the practical work of founding a colony across the Blue Mountains, in the new region which seemed to offer unbounded possibilities of agricultural and pastoral prosperity. Governor Macquarie set his convict labourers at work on the great task of building a road across the mountains. For three months the chain-gangs were employed in clearing timber and levelling the ground to make it available for traffic, and at the end of that time—so quickly had they done their work, under the stern discipline of the overseers, whose whips were always ready to fall upon the shoulders of the laggard or the poor, weary, stumbling wretch—the Governor himself drove along it to the further end, which had already been marked out as the site of a new town, to be called Bathurst.

That road is still the highway from Sydney, and even now the travellers who remember its history can hardly refrain from a painful thought or two of the forced labour, and of all the sufferings and misery that went to the making of it.

While Bathurst was in process of building, Surveyor Evans made a further journey along the banks of the Macquarie River, and discovered that it was joined by another tributary stream, evidently of considerable importance. Having already used the Governor's surname, but still desirous of giving honour to his chief, he called the river the Lachlan, after the Christian name of the energetic Scotsman. Still, however, there was a mystery attaching to both these rivers, for whence and whither flowed the Macquarie or the Lachlan had not yet been discovered. To solve these problems was the next duty of Australian pioneers.

A Government surveyor, Lieutenant John Oxley, R.N., was the man selected for this task. In 1877 a strong expedition was equipped, consisting of a numerous party of men with plenty of horses, and provisions sufficient to last for several months. In this respect the early explorations differed from those of a later date, when it was found by experience that two or three resolute men with a single horse apiece, and two or three black fellows, could push ahead more rapidly

and endure far greater fatigue than a large body of official gentlemen, who, as a rule, were disinclined to sacrifice much of their personal comfort or hazard uncertain adventures. Oxley himself was a man of pessimistic character, always prone to look upon the gloomy side of things, and this characteristic prevented him from making discoveries afterwards falling to the honour of more daring and hopeful temperaments. Nevertheless, his journeys, although failing to trace the course of the Lachlan and Macquarie Rivers, added much to the knowledge of the country in the south-east corner of Australia, and he also gained much interesting information of the native people in that region.

His progress was slow and painful, owing to the tall, rank grass and the tangled scrub through which they had to force their way. Then, as they advanced along the banks of the Lachlan, the stream presently flowed into a great swamp and seemed to disappear entirely into boggy land. Under the impression that the river was lost in a multitude of small streams flowing into a vast, impassable morass, Oxley turned southwards in order to reach the coast, thus missing by only a few miles the greatest river of New South Wales. This stage of his journey was more difficult than the previous one. In front of them stretched 'a sea of trees,' as the leader described it, but what was actually a great forest of 'wattle,' or acacia, growing so closely, and so intertwined with tough ropes of creeping vines, stretching from bush to bush, that, in order to proceed, it was necessary to hack a path through with knife and axe. Sometimes when they had emerged from the scrub they came upon great barren plains of loose red sand, or vast, silent solitudes, thinly wooded and depressingly monotonous—'quite desolate and unfit for occupation by civilized man,' said Oxley in his report. These gloomy words have long ago been disproved, for not many years after he wrote them great herds of cattle were getting good pasture in that very district.

Often as the travellers advanced they came upon signs of

native camps, and at night they saw glimmering wood-fires in the distance, a somewhat comforting proof of human life. Now and again, too, they surprised small parties of black-fellows or some solitary savage who had wandered away from his tribe. There is something very pitiful in the accounts of these meetings, and one cannot help feeling a deep sense of commiseration for those poor wretched specimens of humanity, thinly scattered over a vast country, absolutely deficient in the most elementary forms of civilized life, naked, and sometimes terribly diseased, scratching among the roots of trees for a little moisture to quench their thirst in parched districts, and so dull-witted that in many cases they paid no more attention to the white strangers passing by—beings utterly different from themselves in features, dress, and habits—than if they had been shadows moving across the grass. That was not always the case, however, and sometimes when the white men came suddenly upon one or more of these natives the poor wretches were seized with a panic that almost paralyzed them, so that they could hardly run away. Or, again, a little family or tribe would show unusual courage and curiosity, approaching with friendly signs, and examining the strangers with a child-like simplicity and amusement, while others would hurl a few spears, with shouts of defiance, before stampeding at the first sound of the white men's fire-arms. It was this uncertainty of behaviour that so puzzled the early explorers, for there seemed no common union among these tribes, as in other savage countries, and no general characteristics. They were more like animals of different species, wandering about in separate families, friendly or hostile, brave or cowardly, according to the character of the individuals.

Oxley gives an interesting account of two natives he encountered during this journey. The Englishmen had just pitched their tent, when, hearing the noise of a stone hatchet, evidently made by a blackfellow in climbing a tree, they stole silently upon him just as he was about to descend.

‘He did not perceive us,’ wrote Oxley, ‘until we were immediately under the tree ; his terror and astonishment were extreme. We used every friendly motion in our power to induce him to descend, but in vain. He kept calling loudly, as we supposed, for some of his companions to come to his assistance. In the meantime he threw down to us the game he had procured (a ring-tailed opossum), making signs for us to take it up. In a short time another native came towards us, when the other descended from the tree. They trembled excessively, and, if the expression may be used, were absolutely intoxicated with fear, displayed in a thousand antic motions, convulsive laughter, and singular motions of the head. They were both youths, not exceeding twenty years of age, of good countenance and figure, but most horribly marked by the skin and flesh being raised in long stripes all over the back and body. Some of these stripes were fully $\frac{3}{4}$ inch deep, and were so close together that scarcely any of the original skin was to be seen between them. The man who had joined us had three or four small opossums and a snake, which he also laid upon the ground before us. We led them to our tent, when their surprise at everything they saw clearly showed that we were the first white men they had met with. They had, however, either heard of or seen tomahawks. for upon giving one to one of them, he clasped it to his breast, and demonstrated the greatest pleasure. After admiring it for some time, they discovered the broad arrow with which it was marked on both sides, the impression of which exactly resembles that made by the foot of the emu. It amused them extremely, and they frequently pointed to it and the emu-skins which we had with us. All this time they were paying great attention to the roasting of their opossums, and when they were scarcely warm through they opened them, and, taking out the fat of the entrails, presented it to us as the choicest morsel ; on our declining it, they ate it themselves, and again covered up the opossums in hot ashes. When these were apparently well done, they laid them, the snake, and the

things we had presented them with, on the ground, making signs that they wished to go, which, of course, we allowed them to do, with the little store of provisions and such things as we were able to spare them.'

Oxley and his companions had many similar encounters, though he could seldom establish such friendly relations with the blackfellows. The sufferings of the white men were very severe as they proceeded through a great tract of waterless country, and many horses dropped dead from exhaustion and thirst. Eventually, however, the explorers came upon the Macquarie River again, and experienced great joy at finding themselves in a series of lovely valleys, where the grass grew green and fresh, and finely-wooded hills stretched away on either side. Unfortunately, they again lost the track of the river, and, returning to Bathurst, Oxley reported his decisive opinion that the Lachlan and Macquarie flowed either into a great inland sea or into a vast morass of swampy ground.

Sir Thomas Brisbane, then Governor of New South Wales, was dissatisfied with this conclusion, which seemed to him insufficiently proved, and Oxley was sent out on further expeditions. The first of these journeys was the most adventurous that Oxley had undertaken. Following the Macquarie until it was lost in another region of fluid, peaty soil, through which they floundered ankle-deep, the travellers struck away into a hitherto unknown country, passing over a range of hills, afterwards known as Mount Exmouth, and then through a well-wooded, park-like district which led to a vast stretch of good pasture-land, subsequently called the Liverpool Plains. Pressing onwards towards the coast, Oxley and his friends presently found themselves faced by a new range of mountainous country, up which they clambered with great difficulty, owing to the thickly-tangled bush. Here on the high ridges and peaks they were astounded by a wonderful series of waterfalls which, with a deafening and awe-inspiring noise, tumbled down from ledge to ledge, cut into steps 100 feet high down the side of a great chasm,

and fell into a seething cauldron below. These natural water-works were called the Bathurst Falls, and are famous as one of the greatest wonders of Australian scenery. It had been easier for Oxley's party to mount to these heights than to get down again on the other side. The hills were cut into what Oxley called 'frightful precipices,' and after descending for 5,000 feet at the risk of losing their foothold and being dashed to death, they were confronted by another high ridge, which put their endurance to the severest test. When, however, they had scaled its summit their struggles were rewarded by the sight of the open sea—the great Pacific Ocean—stretching away to the horizon, while below them, for about fifty miles to the coast, they looked down upon a beautiful panorama of wooded slopes and grassy valleys through which small streams meandered to the sea.

It was on the last part of their journey through this pleasant and refreshing tract of country that Oxley had his most serious encounter with blackfellows. He perceived that this part of the country was more thickly populated with native tribes than any he had previously passed through; for that reason he ordered his men to be more on their guard. Nothing, however, occurred for some time to cause them any anxiety. The blackfellows shunned their approach, or if surprised showed the usual signs of excessive timidity. One evening, however, one of the men, named William Blake, had entered the bushes about 100 yards from the rest of his people with the intention of cutting a cabbage-palm.

'He had cut one about half-way through,' wrote Oxley in his journal, 'when he received a spear through his back, the point of which struck against his breast-bone. On turning his head round to see from whence he was attacked, he received another which passed several inches through the lower part of his body. He let fall the axe with which he was cutting, and it was instantly seized by a native, the only one he saw, and it was probably the temptation of the axe that was the principal incitement to the attack.'

A few days later a number of natives approached the white men's camp; 'as they came in peace, so in peace they were received.' They seemed very friendly, and made their fires close to Oxley's tents, but on the following morning, when some members of his exploring party had left the camp for a while, the blackfellows made a sudden and treacherous attack, hurling their spears at the white men. Two of them, Dr. Harris and Mr. Evans, the Government surveyor, narrowly escaped death from these missiles, and as Oxley himself sat writing his journal, from which this account is taken, one of their spears pierced his tent, whizzed over his shoulder, and stuck into the ground at his feet. Other men in the camp had similar escapes, but by the greatest good fortune no one was hurt. As soon as Oxley could rally his men after this unpleasant surprise, he led them against the treacherous natives, who were posted on the adjoining hill, and, as he had expected, they fled without any further fighting. During the remainder of the journey they were unmolested by blackfellows, and eventually reached the coast at Newcastle, where a little settlement had existed for some years. On Oxley's third and last expedition he was fortunate in finding the broad and beautiful river called after the Governor, Sir Thomas Brisbane, which flowed through the most magnificent woodland scenery that had yet been found on the Australian continent, and at the mouth of which there was in later years to spring up the prosperous and well-built town of Brisbane, capital of the colony of Queensland.

Oxley's 'inland sea' theory still remained in spite of all his journeys, with the effect of discouraging any further expeditions on the part of the succeeding Governors, as well as the private efforts of the free English colonists, who now began to arrive in considerable numbers, and to turn Australia into a country of enterprising farmers, instead of leaving it as the 'dumping-ground' for convicts. These squatters, as they were called, were glad, moreover, to have new districts opened to them as grazing grounds for their sheep or cattle or as

agricultural land, but they were not inspired to push into the interior with no better prospect than finding a vast lake or swamp. Nevertheless, there were always some adventurous minds haunted by the romance and mystery of the great unknown, and even the Governors, though unwilling at this time to spend much money on further exploration, were anxious to acquire an easy reputation by new discoveries. One of these Governors hit upon the ingenious, though, to put it plainly, the criminal idea of planting a number of convicts half-way between Port Jackson and Port Phillip, with the offer of a reward to anyone who should find his way back to Sydney. Fortunately for the good fame of Sir Thomas Brisbane and the lives of the wretched convicts who might have been selected for the preposterous adventure, the plan fell through, owing to the strong criticism of a young Scotsman named Alexander Hume. This young man was a born explorer. At the age of seventeen he had already made several adventurous little expeditions on his own account, and before he had reached his twentieth year he had added to the geographical knowledge of Australia by the discovery of Lake Bathurst and Lake George, and later on by tracking up the Murrumbidgee River. Hume now offered to conduct an exploration from Sydney to Port Phillip, provided the Governor's scheme was abandoned. This offer was accepted, and Hume lived up to his colonial reputation by being the first to find the great Murray River, and by proving that the Lachlan was a tributary of that noble stream. This at once put an end to the notion of a great inland sea, into which the Lachlan had been supposed to flow. Hume also discovered and crossed the highest range of hills in Australia, the Warragong Mountains, at the southern base of the continent. His journey was memorable, not only on account of these valuable facts resulting from it, but also because of the admirable example he set to all future explorers by his patience, courage, and infinite resource in the face of difficulty and danger.

His chief companion, a man named Hovell, was constantly

quarrelling with his leader's plans, and on more than one occasion nearly induced Hume's men to turn back and abandon the journey when they were confronted by hardship and peril. But Hume was a strong man, and threatened death to any deserter except Hovell, who might go any way he pleased, if he went alone. Hovell did go off, with one companion who managed to escape with him, but both men, after a terrible time in the hill country, were only too glad to follow their companions' track and rejoin them in a humbler frame of mind.

Meanwhile Hume continued his way indomitably, improvising strange ingenious craft to cross the swollen streams, always having a rough but ready plan for any emergency that turned up, and showing the unerring instinct of the woodsman when a way had to be found through forests or over hills. His name will always be honourably remembered among the pioneers of Australian exploration.

Captain Charles Sturt was another who adventured into the great interior, and he had the good fortune of being accompanied by Hume. The year 1828-1829 was one of great suffering to the colonists on account of a terrible drought, which burnt up the grass as if it had actually been scorched by fire, and dried up the rivers in their beds. Sheep and cattle died in large numbers, the ground in many of the previously fertile districts was barren of harvest, and the colonists were in such desperate need of water that the old tale of an inland sea or lake began to dominate the imagination of the colonists like a beautiful vision of hope. Sturt, who had been deeply stirred by the spirit of previous explorers, volunteered to go in search of inland waters beyond the region of his sun-baked earth, and upon receiving the encouragement of the Government, set off from the banks of the Macquarie River on a long journey through untracked country. The hardships of the early explorers were as nothing compared to the trials of Sturt and his companions, for their path lay through hundreds of miles of parched land from which every

drop of moisture had been evaporated by the fierce heat of the Southern sun. 'So long had the drought continued,' said Sturt in his story of 'Two Expeditions,' 'that the vegetable kingdom was almost annihilated, and minor vegetation had disappeared.' Great trees which had once been clothed in luxurious foliage now stood gauntly in the burning sunshine, with but a few dead leaves upon their scorched and blackened limbs. Others had fallen like stricken giants across dry ruts which had once been filled with silvery streams. Birds of every kind lay dead or dying, and emus with their feathers miserably moulting ran with outstretched necks, gasping for breath, vainly searching for rivers which no longer existed. The utter desolation and horror of this waterless land were intensified by encounters with wandering natives, fearfully emaciated, their tongues lolling out like thirsty brutes and dragging themselves miserably towards the hill country in the hope of finding some pools or springs where they might get refreshment. Those unfortunate blackfellows were often so exhausted by suffering that when they reached the water-pools they lay down and died before they could quench their raging thirst. Perhaps some of them died from drinking too much of the precious liquid. Nothing, indeed, could have been more unutterably pathetic than the sight of one of those pools crowded by panting and prostrate human beings, and by wild birds and beasts, who in the extremity of their suffering lost their fear of man and of each other.

Sturt and his friends had many interesting encounters with native tribes, some of whom became friendly when their first terror at the appearance of the white strangers had been overcome, and by expressive signs gave valuable information as to the locality of the water-pools in their neighbourhood. Most of them were absolutely naked, though here and there some of the tribes wore short cloaks of kangaroo-skin. They were all hideously ugly, with broad noses, sunken eyes, overhanging eyebrows, and thick lips, and their bodies were horrible in appearance, owing to their custom of lacerating the flesh in a

manner that raised great weals all over their backs and chests, while some of them were hideously painted with red and yellow ochre. More than once the travellers surprised a native village, and in their alarm the savages instantly set fire to their huts and fled with yells of terror. At other times they followed the white men on their march, and fired the dry grass around them, which blazed up fiercely and spread with extraordinary rapidity, so that Sturt's party had the greatest difficulty in preventing themselves from being burned alive. It was with the utmost astonishment, and a joy so great that they could hardly believe the evidence of their own senses, that Sturt and his companions suddenly came upon the banks of a broad and swiftly-flowing river. They had at last got beyond the region of the drought, and here before them lay a green valley and a great stream, where great flocks of wild-fowl flew without fear of man. Even bright flowers grew upon the banks, and tall, fresh grass waved above the water. No wonder, to the travellers who had wandered so long through a parched desert, this beautiful sight seemed to them the mirage of disordered brains, a dream from which they would presently wake with despair in their hearts! But it was a splendid reality, and for sixty-five miles they journeyed down the Darling River, as they called it, as usual after the Governor, finding it still running broad and deep between its banks, until they came to a tributary, which they discovered to be their old friend the Macquarie River. Sturt and Hume were proud and happy men when they made their report to Governor Darling, and to their courage and endurance the early Australian colonists were indebted for the discovery of one of the most fertile regions of the world, to be famous in the future as the Darling Downs, where enormous flocks of sheep have found their finest pasture-lands. In a subsequent journey Sturt further explored the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers and their adjacent country, thus mapping out the whole of the great watershed through New South Wales.

Between the years 1833 and 1836 Thomas Mitchell, the

Surveyor-General of New South Wales, following in the footsteps of Sturt, made several long and notable journeys down the Darling and the Murray, and then through a great track of country previously unexplored, to which, on account of its beauty and fertility, he gave the name of Australia Felix. That title, however, was afterwards considered too pedantic for common use, and is now known to all the world as the colony of Victoria. Mitchell's journeys were unfortunate in one respect. He does not seem to have had the same tact as his predecessors in avoiding serious hostilities with the native tribes, and the Myalls, or 'fighting blacks,' of the Darling gave him a good deal of trouble. Their enmity seems to have been caused in the first place by a young warrior having been wounded in a fight with one of Mitchell's men, who resented the blackfellow's insolent conduct. Be that as it may, however, a man named Cunningham was carried off and killed by the savages, and disposed of in a cannibal feast. Then part of the tribe approached the white men's camp, threatening them with violent and abusive gestures, spitting at them, and waving green branches into their faces as a sign of contempt and hatred. Mitchell endeavoured to appease them by presenting the chief with a tomahawk. This pleased him considerably, but Mitchell followed up his advantage by firing a bullet into a tree with the idea of filling the savages with a little wholesome fear of the white men's 'magic.'

'The scene which followed,' wrote Mitchell in his account of this journey, 'I cannot satisfactorily describe or represent, although I shall never forget it. As if they had previously suspected we were evil demons, and had at length a clear proof of it, they repeated their gesticulations of defiance with tenfold fury, and accompanied the action with demoniac looks, hideous shouts, and a war-song—crouching, jumping, spitting, springing with the spear, and throwing dust at us as they slowly retired. In short, their hideous, crouching postures, measured gestures, slow jumps, all to the time of a wild song, with the fiendish glare of their countenances, at times all

black, but now all eyes and teeth, seemed a fitter spectacle for pandemonium. Thus the savages retired slowly along the river bank, all the while dancing in a circle like the witches in "Macbeth," and leaving us in expectation of their return in the morning. Any further attempt to appease them was out of the question.'

Nothing serious happened for a day or two, although the tribe made a raid upon one part of the camp, and stole everything they could lay their hands or feet upon (for they used their feet in a monkey-like fashion, clutching anything with their toes with extraordinary facility). One night also they were seen painted white in a hideous manner, like skeletons, and dancing round a fire in a wild war-dance. Then hostilities commenced in earnest, and the blacks hurled their spears at the white men and fired the grass round their camp.

Mitchell decided to retreat, and succeeded in getting beyond the reach of that particularly hostile tribe, but the same incidents occurred at other stages of his journey, and on one occasion there was something like a pitched battle with fixed bayonets and rifle volleys before they could beat back the enemy.

Mitchell's survey of 'Australia Felix' resulted speedily in a steady stream of colonists from New South Wales, who sought fresh pastures for their great herds of cattle and flocks of sheep. These ranchers and squatters spread over the whole country, pushing out in every direction where good grass-lands could be found; and as considerable numbers of enterprising men were now arriving from the mother-country to build up homes and fortunes in Australia, competition became keener for acquiring new sheep and cattle runs from the east coast to the west.

In a few years the city of Melbourne was on the high-road to prosperity as the capital of the new colony of Victoria, Adelaide was becoming an important town at the mouth of the Murray River, and there were settlements as far west as King George's Sound and Flinders Bay. Between Adelaide, how-

ever, and the western coast of the island continent there was still a great stretch of unknown country from the coast-line of the Great Australian Bight away into the unexplored interior. To the squatters in the west it was a very important thing to open up a line of communication by road to Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney, and it was equally desirable for the colonists of New South Wales and Victoria to join hands with the south-west settlements.

The right man for attaining this object was found in Edward Eyre, a prosperous squatter who had already shown his gifts for exploration by journeying at his own cost to the desert land around Lake Torrens. With admirable generosity and public spirit Eyre volunteered to sell the greater part of his stock for the purpose of equipping an expedition which he was willing to lead across the unknown country, provided the Government would make up the necessary balance of the expense. This having been arranged, Eyre, with a small party of black boys and John Baxter, his overseer, made a preliminary journey from Adelaide to Flinders Range and Lake Torrens in order to discover whether it would be possible to find a way through the inland country to the west. Their sufferings were very severe during this first stage of the great attempt. Their way lay through a barren desert of sand and scrub, and the agony caused by a lack of water during their weary marches under a scorching sun was intensified by the tantalizing illusion of the mirage. Often as they groped onwards, with parched throats and swollen tongues, they would see before them in the distance a vision of silvery lakes margined with green trees and washing the banks of lovely little islands. So real did the illusion seem that the travellers would push on, with panting breath and stumbling footsteps, to slake their thirst in those smiling waters, only to find with despair that the vision disappeared as they advanced, and the barren plain still stretched before them.

The deadly monotony of the journey was occasionally broken by encounters with blackfellows, generally solitary wanderers who fled howling at the sight of the strangers. Once they came

upon a native woman, and took her to their camp, hoping to get some information from her as to the whereabouts of any water ; but she was so fearfully scared that she only screamed at them, and brought down her tribe, who surrounded the white men, with fierce gestures. Fortunately no fighting took place, as the woman was promptly released with presents.

Eyre pushed on ahead with one white man and a black boy, but there seemed no use in pursuing this journey through barren wastes, and Eyre wisely decided to turn back. Some grateful rest was taken under the shadow of a great rock, and then, refreshed after their long fatigue, the whole party returned to Adelaide.

Eyre came to the conclusion that he could only get over land to the west coast by going along the top of the cliffs skirting the coast of the Great Bight, and he set out on his new attempt with John Baxter, his trusty overseer, four black boys, and a number of horses and sheep. The same difficulties were experienced, however, and water was as scarce as ever. Their own store was limited to a pint per day for the whole party, hardly sufficient to moisten their cracked and swollen lips. Now and again they were able to get a little by digging deep into the sand, and occasionally some blackfellows they met gave them information of water-pools ahead ; but too often, after a long march over the burning cliffs and through the thick scrub, they found the water-pools dried up or missed them altogether. As they trudged on for hundreds of miles horses and sheep dropped dead, and, in spite of Eyre's supreme courage and the sturdy determination of John Baxter, despair took possession of their hearts. It was no use turning back now, but there seemed no hope of ever reaching their goal. The fine sand of the desert filled their ears and eyes, got into their throats, and, mixing with the sweat of their bodies, caked them with a sort of hard crust. Then thousands of tiny flies swarmed about them as they forced their way through tangled scrub, and stung them in every part of their bodies, until they were almost maddened with the pain. The only relief they

could get from their long torture was at night when the sun went down, and they were able to obtain a little moisture by collecting the heavy dew from the bush in a sponge, as they had seen the blackfellows do with a handful of grass. But even at night they suffered bodily torment, for their clothes were now torn to rags, and the intense coldness when the sun had set was as difficult to bear as the scorching heat of the day.

A great tragedy now happened which plunged poor Eyre into the darkest despair. Two of his black boys had been guilty of theft and insubordination, so that he had been obliged to punish them, and they waited until he was absent one day in search of water to take a treacherous revenge. As Eyre was returning to camp, he was startled by the sharp report of a gun. In great alarm, he hurried back, and was met by one of the black boys named Wylie, who ran towards him, crying in a state of terrible excitement, 'Oh, massa! Oh, massa, come here!' He was too terrified to answer any questions, but as soon as Eyre reached his camp, he was horrified to find his overseer, John Baxter, lying on the ground, weltering in his blood, and in the last agonies of death. The two black boys had disappeared, but the baggage was scattered all over the ground in wild disorder, and it was clear that they had stolen everything they could carry off.

'Upon raising the body of my faithful but ill-fated follower,' wrote Eyre afterwards, 'I found that he was beyond all human aid. He had been shot through the left breast with a ball, and he expired almost immediately. The frightful, the appalling, truth now burst upon me that I was alone in the desert. The horrors of my situation glared upon me in such startling reality as for an instant to paralyze the mind. At the dead hour of night, in the wildest and most inhospitable wastes of Australia, with the fierce wind raging in unison with the scene of violence before me, I was left with a single native, whose fidelity I could not rely upon, and who, for aught I knew, might be in league with the other two, who perhaps

were even now lurking about with the view of taking my life as they had done that of the overseer. Three days had passed since we left the last water, and it was very doubtful when we might find any more. Six hundred miles of country had to be traversed before I could hope to obtain the slightest aid or assistance of any kind, whilst I knew not that a single drop of water, or an ounce of flour, had been left by these murderers from the stock that had previously been so small.

‘With an aching heart and in most painful reflections, I passed this dreadful night. Every moment appeared to be protracted to an hour, and it seemed as if daylight would never appear. About midnight the wind ceased, and the weather became bitterly cold and frosty. I had nothing on but a shirt and a pair of trousers, and suffered most acutely from the cold. To mental anguish was now added intense bodily pain. Suffering and distress had well-nigh overwhelmed me, and life seemed hardly worth the effort to prolong it. Ages can never efface the horrors of this single night, nor would the wealth of the world ever tempt me to go through a similar one again. At last daylight dawned once more, but sad and heart-rending was the scene it presented to my view after driving the horses to what had been our last night’s camp. The corpse of my poor companion lay extended on the ground, with his eyes open, but cold and glazed in death. The same stern resolution and fearless open look which had characterized him when living stamped the expression of his countenance even now. He had fallen upon his back 4 or 5 yards from where he had been sleeping, and was dressed only in his shirt. In all probability the noise made by the natives in plundering the camp had awoke him, and upon his jumping up, with a view of stopping them, they had fired upon and killed him.’

Eyre’s fear regarding the loyalty of his remaining black boy, Wylie, was fortunately disproved. The young savage followed his master with the fidelity of a dog, watching over him when he slept, supporting him when he stumbled, leading him when he was nearly blind with the glare of the sun and sand.

Together they wandered alone across those 600 miles of desert land, digging for water, and finding just sufficient to preserve their lives, occasionally shooting a wild bird, now and again falling in with friendly natives, who caught fish for them.

At last they reached King George's Sound, and there on the glittering waves the gleam of sunlight on white sails met their eyes, a vision fairer than the mirage because they knew it to be true. The vessel was a French whaling barque, under the command of an English captain. From that genial sailor Eyre and his companion received the friendliest assistance and all the comforts at his command. With his help they reached the settlements on the west coast, and soon this tale of heroic endurance became a household word and a great tradition in every Australian home.

A young man named Captain Grey—afterwards famous as an administrator of New Zealand, with the title of Sir George Grey—was the first overland explorer of Western Australia, from the little settlement of Albany at the southernmost base to Dampier Land on the north-west. His journey was comparatively uneventful, except for one dramatic and dangerous adventure, which all but cost him his life. With a few companions he set off from the schooner, which had taken them to Hanover Bay, for a preliminary survey in the interior. It was a district inhabited by notoriously hostile tribes, and Grey was certainly guilty of rashness in venturing among them with such a small force. An incident that happened a few days after their landing was a sign of coming trouble. During a rain-squall the little party of Englishmen took shelter behind a big rock at the summit of a narrow defile. Suddenly, as they looked down the slope, they became aware of a number of savages, armed with heavy clubs, spears, and throwing-sticks, creeping up the rocks in Indian file, crouched low with hunched-up backs, like animals preparing to spring upon their foe. They were evidently following the tracks that had been made by the white men, but they were taken by surprise when they suddenly came face to face with Grey and his com-

panions. The leader sprang back with a startled yell, which was repeated by his followers; but they stood their ground, and each man poised his spear, ready for the throw. Grey stood up, and endeavoured to obtain their friendliness by pacific signs. Their attitude, however, became still more threatening, and, believing that a conflict was inevitable, Grey sent a bullet whizzing over their heads. This had an immediate effect upon them, and, after standing with curiously rolling eyeballs, they retreated down the rocky path, and disappeared into the thicket. Grey, with the sanguine temperament of youth, believed that he had seen the last of the natives; but it was not long before he was disillusioned on this point.

One day a man who had been employed on some duty at a little distance from the main body of his companions came rushing in in a state of sheer panic, followed by a native, running at full speed, with his spear fixed in his throwing-stick. Grey was for a moment inclined to smile at the ludicrous terror of his man flying from one naked savage, but at that moment, as if by magic, black men swarmed around his party on every side, bounding out of the surrounding woods and breaking the deep silence with demoniac yells. Grey realized in a flash that he was in a very 'tight corner.' He whipped out his pistol and sent a bullet whizzing over the head of the foremost savage, who was close upon the heels of the unfortunate Englishman, hoping the noise of the report would bring him to a stand. But the man only paused to hurl his spear, which came hurtling past Grey's head, and to fix another in his throwing-stick. Grey then fired again, and the bullet pierced the native's right arm, so that his weapon went clattering to the ground. This was the work of but a few moments, during which the other savages had come dangerously close. Grey made a sign to his companions, and together they retreated to the shelter of the rocks, which formed a kind of protecting parapet. Spears now came whizzing from all directions, but by extraordinary good luck no one was hurt. The leader of the tribe, who was of a lighter

colour than the others, then sprang on to a rock within thirty paces of the white men, and, poisoning his spear, took a deliberate and deadly aim at George Grey, who only saved himself by a sudden jerk forward, so that the weapon only grazed his back. Another spear almost pinned him to the rock, but in the nick of time he guarded his chest by the stock of his rifle, which was splintered with the force of the blow.

‘I now recognised in the light-coloured man,’ wrote Grey in describing this dramatic episode, ‘the old enemy who had led on the former attack. By his cries and gestures he now appeared to be urging the others to surround and press on us, which they were rapidly doing. I saw now that but one thing could be done to save our lives, so I gave Coles my gun to complete the reloading, and took the rifle. Stepping out from behind our parapet, I advanced to the rock which covered my light-coloured opponent. I had not made two steps in advance when three spears struck me nearly at the same moment, one of which was thrown by him. I felt severely wounded in the hip, but knew not where the others had struck me. The force of all knocked me down, and made me feel very giddy and faint. But as I fell I heard the savage yells of the natives’ delight and triumph; these recalled me to myself, and, roused by momentary rage and indignation, I made a strong effort, rallied, and in a moment was on my legs. The spear was wrenched from my wound and my haversack drawn closely over it, that neither my own party nor the natives might see it, and I advanced steadily to the rock. The man became alarmed, and threatened me with his club, yelling most furiously; but as I neared the rock, behind which all but his head and arm was covered, he fled to an adjoining one, dodging dexterously, according to the native manner of confusing an assailant and avoiding the cast of his spear; but he was scarcely uncovered in his flight when my rifle-ball pierced him through the back between the shoulders, and he fell heavily on his face with a deep groan.

‘The effect was electrical. The tumult of the combat had

ceased ; not another spear was thrown, not another yell uttered. Native after native dropped away and noiselessly disappeared. I stood alone with the wretched savage dying before me, and my two men close to me behind the rocks, in the attitude of deep attention, and as I looked round upon the dark rocks and forests, now suddenly silent and lifeless, but for the sight of the unhappy being who lay on the ground before me, I could have thought the whole affair a horrid dream.'

The man was not dead, and was presently able to raise himself on his elbow and look around him. At this sign of life some of his companions appeared again, and, stealing back with many fearful glances at the white men, they lifted up the leader with the greatest tenderness and carried him off to the woods. There was no further sign of them, and Grey was not attacked again. His wounds prostrated him for some time, and he had to be carried back to the schooner ; but after his complete recovery he proceeded upon his journey across Western Australia, and explored a great tract of country hitherto unvisited by white men.

The first man who achieved the great exploit of crossing the Australian continent from the south-east coast to the extreme north was a German colonist named Ludwig Leichardt, accompanied by a small party of Englishmen and black-fellows. Setting out from Brisbane in the year 1844-1845, they travelled steadily for fifteen months over 3,000 miles of sandy deserts, high rocks, tangled scrub, and grassy plains, arriving, after an eventful journey, at Port Essington when they had long been given up for lost, and when detailed rumours of their massacre had caused great grief throughout Australia. One man had been lost, having been killed by a spear in an affray with savages, while two other men had been seriously wounded by barbed arrows. The usual sufferings had also been experienced, owing to lack of water and the tortures of the scorching sun, but Leichardt was not deterred from further exploration, and three years later, in 'fatal '48,' as that year is called, he set out on an expedition overland,

from east to west. The details of that journey have never been known, for not one of the party ever came back to tell the tale of their adventures, and they disappeared as completely as if the ground had swallowed them up. From that day to this no trace or sign of the explorers has ever been discovered.

In the same year a man named Kennedy, who travelled up the centre of the York Peninsula, which forms the eastern coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria, was surrounded by savages when he was almost at his journey's end, and fell under a shower of spears, his faithful black boy, Jacky Jacky, escaping to tell the tragic tale. To that fatal year also belongs the ill-starred expedition of Burke and Wills, a tragedy that long haunted the imagination of Australian colonists. Burke was a hot-headed Irish police officer who, in spite of his undoubted courage, does not seem to have had any other qualifications for exploring.

Although the expedition was splendidly equipped at Government expense, with a fine caravan of camels, horses, live-stock, and provisions, it was badly managed from the outset, owing to the party being divided and their instructions being so vague that they had no accurate knowledge of their leaders' intentions. Upon arriving at a place called Cooper's Creek, Burke and Wills, and two other men named King and Gray, pushed on ahead with the idea of rejoining one of the small parties into which the expedition was now split up, who were to remain in that neighbourhood with the bulk of the stores when they, the leaders, had achieved the object of their journey. Burke and his three comrades actually reached the northern coast, but they had gone on with a hopelessly inadequate supply of provisions, and upon their return journey to Cooper's Creek they were reduced to starvation rations. The man named Gray fell seriously ill of dysentery, but was suspected of malingering. A few days later he was accused of stealing some of the flour upon which they depended for their lives, and Burke flogged him so severely that, in his

weak condition, he died under the punishment. It was with gloomy hearts that the three survivors—Burke, Wills, and King—made their way back to the Creek, to find that the party left at that place had quitted their post. They had, however, carefully buried a store of provisions and put up a sign explaining their position. The three famished men were able to recruit their strength by food and rest, but Burke, with his usual headstrong temperament, insisted on continuing their homeward journey by a new route instead of taking every precaution to join one of the other parties with their stores. Eventually both Burke and Wills died of exhaustion and hunger, and King was left alone in a desperate plight. He was saved from starvation by some kindly and generous blackfellows, who shared their scanty food with him, although they were also in a state of semi-starvation, and helped him to rejoin one of the parties so fatally divided by Burke's instructions. The usual contempt and hatred of the Australian colonists for the natives should have been restrained by the thought of that noble charity of the blackfellows to King the explorer.

About twelve years after the tragedy of Burke and Wills had taken place, the overland route from the extreme south to the extreme north of the Australian continent was opened out in a thoroughly successful and scientific way by McDouall Stuart. This gallant and determined man had made a previous attempt in 1858, but had been forced back by hostile natives, who barred his path in such strong numbers that he wisely decided to retreat rather than risk the annihilation of his party. In 1860, however, he made a new start, with eleven men, well horsed, and with twelve months' provisions. Proceeding by way of Lake Torrens, Lake Eyre, Chambers' Pillar—a strange monument of sandstone rock, rising some 350 feet above the plain—and then to the Roper River, they at last reached the great northern gulf, and one of his men who had pushed ahead raised the joyful cry of 'The sea! The sea!'

This second journey had been singularly free from distressing

incidents. The natives were much more friendly than on the previous expedition, and gave them no trouble, while McDouall Stuart had either a peculiar genius for striking well-watered country, or was exceptionally lucky in that respect. Sufferings there were, of course, and times when their march over barren and glaring deserts taxed their utmost strength. But such was Stuart's indomitable courage that a day after raising the Union Jack on the northern sea-coast, to the hearty cheering of his comrades, and after bathing his swollen hands in the sunny water of the Indian Ocean, he turned his face to the south, and set off again on the long homeward journey. This, however, was too great a tax even upon the strength of such a hardened traveller as Stuart, and he became so thin and wasted that his comrades despaired of his life. For hundreds of miles he drooped over the neck of his horse, with glazed eyes and puffed-up lips; but gradually, as they passed the desert, and rested for a time in a pleasant oasis, he regained his health and all his old indomitable spirit. So well had he done his work, keeping a detailed account of his journey, and making accurate maps of the country through which he passed, that the Government surveyors could afterwards rely implicitly upon the details of his route, and upon this guidance the Overland Telegraph Company were able to carry their wire across the great continent, linking the north to the south by this magic line of electric force, and bringing every part of Australia in direct communication with the far ends of the earth.

Such in brief is the story of Australian exploration—a story of heroic courage and endurance, of strange adventure and romantic travelling, of the gradual unrolling of a great map, on which some of the most beautiful, as well as some of the most barren, territories of the world are now marked down.

CHAPTER XLIII

THE GREAT GOLD RUSH

UNTIL the middle of the nineteenth century Australia, or such parts of it as were then explored, had been a purely pastoral and agricultural country, and in spite of drought and flood, the two great terrors of the Australian colonist, had arrived at a quiet but substantial prosperity, full of promise for the future. Every year new districts were being settled upon by ambitious 'squatters,' who reared immense herds of sheep and cattle upon the rolling downs of New South Wales and Victoria, and every year increasing numbers of men and women from 'the old country' came out to found new homes in a land where there was elbow-room for everyone, and plenty to spare. There is no doubt that if life in Australia had continued upon these lines, peacefully and quietly progressing as an agricultural and pastoral country, it would still have been one of the most favoured parts of the British Empire.

But in 1851 a new era began in the history of Australia which entirely changed its fortunes and its character with a sudden and startling revolution. In that year a discovery was made which directed the attention of the colonists, and, indeed, of the whole world, not to the wealth which might be gained by slow and steady industry from the fertile soil or the grass-covered downs, but to a vast treasure which could be dug out by pick and shovel from the rocky ground of gullies. The shout of 'Gold!' resounded from the hoarse throats of men excited by a vision of sudden wealth. The glamour of gold was soon to dazzle the eyes of adventurers from every part of the world, and to entice them to the Southern colonies with an irresistible attraction.

It was a man named Edward Hargraves who first unearthed the great secret. He had gone out to California to try his luck at the diggings, where so many fortunes were being made

by poor men like himself. Hargraves did not have the luck he had hoped for, but it came to him in a different way. Searching for the yellow metal in the Californian gullies, he was suddenly struck with the thought that round about his old home in the Macquarie Valley there were exactly the same kind of gullies or ravines. Was it possible—his heart jumped at the very thought—was it not extraordinarily probable, that those rocky channels of New South Wales should also hide rich veins of gold? Throwing down his pick, he abandoned the Californian diggings, and hurried back to Australia.

Then he commenced searching about in the neighbourhood of Bathurst, and along the valley of the Macquarie River, saying not a word to anyone, but peering with keen, burning eyes into the holes and crannies of the rocky ground. At a place called Summerhill Creek he came upon clear traces of a gold deposit. His fancy had not been a foolish one after all. Yet he must make sure. One glint of golden quartz would not prove his theory. For a month he went on, searching, searching, searching, and picking and poking and grubbing, his brain throbbing with almost painful exultation, for over an area of seventy miles the river gullies showed unmistakable signs of gold. With extraordinary generosity Edward Hargraves informed the Government of New South Wales of his great discovery, and proclaimed it to the public.

Immediately there was a wild rush from the towns and the farms of New South Wales to the valley of the Macquarie. Stock-riders left their cattle, shepherds their flocks, schoolmasters their desks, and clerks their counting-houses. The blacksmiths were hard at work making picks for this army of diggers, and within a few weeks after the publication of the great news the 'gold fever' was raging throughout Australia, and fast spreading to every country which heard the tidings. It was no fictitious theory on the part of Edward Hargraves. Although many of the men who had abandoned their ordinary business searched in vain for the precious metal, and dug themselves into despair, others were lucky beyond their own

dreams or wildest imagining, and gold nuggets were found in sufficient quantities to work the whole population of Australia into a further frenzy of delight and greed.

Then the Government of Victoria, jealous of this treasure-trove in the rival colony of New South Wales, offered a reward of £200 to anyone who should find a gold-mine within its borders. The reward did not go begging, and the success of New South Wales was quickly put into the shade by the astonishing discoveries, made within a few weeks of each other, in the other colony. Between July and December of 1851 rich veins of gold were found at Anderson's Creek, Buninyong, Ballarat, and Bendigo, and within the next six months the population of South-East Australia was increased by 90,000 men from other countries, while in a period of three years the arrivals reached the enormous total of 250,000.

Never in the history of mankind had such an extraordinary collection of human beings been gathered together as were found in these mining camps of South Australia. They came from the four quarters of the globe, and had belonged to every class and profession of life. German professors from Munich or Heidelberg, American cowboys, Canadian trappers, the younger sons of English noblemen, the ne'er-do-well sons of English clergymen, Scotch crofters and clansmen, Irish squires and Irish peasants, gangs of ex-convicts, bushrangers who had 'turned honest' for the sake of greater gain, stock-riders from the Darling Downs, sheep-shearers from the Lachlan and the Murrumbidgee, adventurers and rogues, peers and pedants, the scum of the earth, and brave, sturdy, honourable men consorted together in the strangest fellowship that the sun ever shone down upon. Many of those men had tramped for hundreds of miles with no property in the world save the pick on their shoulder, the clothes they stood up in, and the pistol in their belt, and a pound or two to buy 'tucker' on the way.

They trusted to luck to turn up some gold before they got too hungry, and if it didn't turn up, they trusted to a pal to

save them from starvation. Luck was certainly, as a rule, on their side. Often enough the gold-dust was not to be found for the looking, but the 'new-chum' rarely lacked a pal ready to share his grub with anyone down on his luck. This rough life, though it resulted in many vices, brought out many virtues also, and the chief of them was that code of comradeship which was seldom broken even by the coarsest and roughest men. Brutal though many of those diggers were, ready enough to shoot down any fellow who 'jumped' a claim already pegged out, or anyone who made off with somebody else's 'dust,' they seldom left a comrade in the lurch so long as he played fair, and were ready to feed or to nurse him if he 'took sick.' Many stories of heroic self-sacrifice and devoted friendship, of rough-bearded men as tender as women may be to a fever-stricken friend, of open-handed generosity to some 'poor devil down on his luck,' brightened the life of those camps which, taking them as a whole, were not conspicuous for high morality or the refinements of civilization. Certainly they had their darker side. Drunkenness was a common vice that killed off many a strong man and swallowed up many a newly-made fortune. The proprietors of the liquor shops in the neighbourhood of the diggings, most of them the greatest scoundrels on the face of the earth, often piled up bigger fortunes behind their drinking-bars than the men who dug up treasure with painful labour. Thousands of the diggers squandered their money in drink as soon as they made it. Working for a week or a month at a time, they would throw down their picks and their pails and make for the nearest whisky shop, where they would plank down their cheque, or dump down their dust, as they called it in the rough jargon of the diggings, and 'drink it out,' until the landlord considered that they had had their money's worth. Then back again they would go after this bout of debauchery to begin all over again, to work from the rising to the setting of the sun, day after day, week after week, until they had got sufficient funds to indulge in the same abominable orgies again.

Gambling was also a besetting sin of the diggers, and gold-dust changed hands over the cards, so that a man who in the morning was worth a small fortune found himself completely beggared in the evening. Not small fortunes only were squandered in utter vice and folly. Authentic stories are told of men who, after months of barren labour, struck a rich claim, and were able to divide £100,000—and in many cases more than that—with two or three partners, only to lose it in less than a year by the wildest profligacy, until they drank themselves to death or died in the gutter.

One man, an ignorant, coarse, brutal fellow of the lowest class, actually drew for a considerable period as much as £500 a day from a claim he had pegged out. For some time he lived in the utmost luxury, 'cutting a dash,' as he called it, in various European cities, and spending large sums of money on horses, jewels, and other forms of extravagant expenditure. Then he took to gambling in bogus mines, and lost his wealth almost as quickly as he had acquired it, eventually dying a bankrupt.

Innumerable indeed are the romances of men who came from the humblest rank and the poorest circumstances to enormous wealth. But it is a sad commentary on human nature that nine out of ten of such cases ended in disaster and ruin. To superstitious minds it might almost seem as if raw gold had some property of evil, and that those who get it fresh from the soil where Nature hides it are contaminated by its touch with some malignant moral disease.

There were many old-fashioned people in Australia of those days who cursed the day when the gold fever took possession of the people. For a time, indeed, it seemed as if it would be the ruin of the country, for the towns were deserted of their working population, building and other trades were at a stand-still, farms were abandoned, and factories were without hands, during the first great rush to the diggings. Things righted themselves, however, in the long-run, and thousands of men who had had no luck at the mines returned to take up quieter and more steady pursuits on the land or in the towns. Then,

too, the tremendous increase in population and the great crowds of hungry men in the camps caused immense demands for food and supplies of every kind, so that new markets were opened to the sheep-farmers and cattle-ranchers of New South Wales and Victoria and to the corn and vegetable growers of South Australia.

Prices, too, were higher at the mining camps than could be got in any other market of the world. The diggers paid down in 'dust' for the daily food they needed for such hard labour, and paid heavily without grumbling. Instead of twopence for a pound of meat, which had been the ordinary price in a country where beef and mutton was cheap, the diggers paid a shilling. Wheat was half a guinea a bushel, and for a bottle of whisky a miner would often have to pay his week's earnings. To take goods to the camps from Victoria or Bathurst the waggon-owners charged at the rate of £100 per ton, and mining tools were often worth literally their weight in gold.

The Governments of New South Wales and Victoria were naturally anxious to derive some benefit from the gold-fields to go towards the development of the colonies, and they decided to levy a tax on every digger who pegged out a claim. This licensing fee, as it was called, was at first fixed at 30s. a month, but afterwards raised to £3. At first sight there does not seem any outrageous tyranny in such a tax, and one's mind compares this trivial sum to the huge fortunes being picked up every month on those rocky grounds. But one must bear in mind that to one lucky digger who 'struck gold' there were perhaps a hundred who laboured for months and years and never saw a glitter from the soil they worked with such painful toil. To these men, who could barely keep themselves from starvation, £3 a month for the privilege of digging was an impossible sum to pay.

The Government of Victoria were determined to enforce the new rule, but every month, when the officials and police endeavoured to collect the obnoxious fees, there was determined opposition on the part of many miners, who absolutely

refused to pay a penny piece for their claims. These 'digger-hunts,' as the search-parties for unlicensed diggers were called, aroused fierce resentment, which soon began to show itself in ominous threats of armed resistance. Revolutionary meetings were held nightly, at which much violent eloquence from political democrats inflamed the minds of the audiences to a dangerous pitch, and fiery watchwords of defiance were hurled against all attempts at 'official tyranny' and 'abuse of privileges.' To the tuneful concertina hundreds of hoarse voices bellowed forth the chorus of 'Britons never, never, never shall be slaves!' and to the banging of camp kettles and tin cans the diggers marched in procession through the camp with the red flag of rebellion.

All this was so far very harmless, but 'speechifying' and marching in procession were succeeded by the smuggling in of arms and ammunition and business-like drilling with musket and pike. It began to look as if the diggers were preparing to fight. An unfortunate and regrettable incident was the spark that finally set on fire this smouldering animosity against the Government. One of the diggers was murdered, and the man who was guilty of the crime was let off by the magistrates on account of 'insufficient evidence.' To the prejudiced minds of the men in the Bendigo camp it seemed as if the Government had purposely outraged the elementary rights of justice to show their indifference to the mining population. Barricades were immediately thrown up across the highway of the camp—a lane known as Eureka Street—and when an official endeavoured to collect the licensing fee he narrowly escaped death by stoning.

This was on November 30, 1852, a day famous in the annals of Australian history. A body of Government troops, under General Mickie, numbering 100 mounted men and 176 infantry, were immediately despatched by the Government to the scene of disorder, with strict orders to overthrow the Eureka stockade and establish martial law in the camp. An excited mass of diggers, with firearms and pikes, sheltered themselves behind overturned carts and piles of timber, and prepared to defend

their position at all costs. When General Mickie advanced and summoned them to surrender they replied with a volley which killed an officer named Captain Wise and mortally wounded four soldiers. But the General showed no hesitation, and at the head of his small but formidable force led a charge upon the stockade, and with one determined rush broke through the defences and fought hand to hand with the diggers. Thirty of them were killed and 125 taken prisoners and the rebel flag torn down. Then the soldiers re-formed, and General Mickie threatened to shoot down the men without mercy unless they laid down their arms. There was nothing to be gained by further resistance, and the humiliated diggers, seeing that the day was lost, abandoned all further resistance. Nevertheless, though they lost the battle, they gained their cause. The Government of Victoria held an inquiry into the miners' grievances, and abolished the hated licensing fees, which had caused all the trouble. Instead of the £3 a month they now demanded only £1 a year, and the miners gladly acquiesced in what seemed a fair and moderate fee for their rights.

CHAPTER XLIV

THE BUSHRANGERS

THE brutality of the old convict days in Australia, the large number of lawless and desperate characters introduced into the colonies by the transportation system, and the wild life of the gold diggings, resulted in a series of daring and ferocious crimes that made the early nineteenth century a reign of terror in certain districts of New South Wales and Victoria. Many escaped convicts, and men who had 'served their time' in the penal colonies at Norfolk Island and Port Phillip, degraded and brutalized by constant flogging, and by the immorality of criminal associates, declared war against society at large, and 'took to the Bush' as outlaws and robbers. These bush-

rangers, as they were called, were often men of extraordinary daring and resolution, and in a country where cool courage was considered one of the highest virtues their exploits often aroused as much admiration as fear among the Australian squatters and diggers, with the exception of those people who actually suffered from their outrages. It is an extraordinary thing, indeed, that public sentiment was often on their side, and the Government found it extremely difficult to capture these desperadoes, owing to the way in which they were sheltered and warned by friends and relatives in the Bush. The movements of the police, and the traps laid for the capture of the evildoers, were constantly frustrated by the rapidity with which information was conveyed to the bushrangers by their sympathizers and confederates. The 'Bush telegraph' was such an organized system that eventually it was necessary to make wholesale arrests of men and women suspected of sheltering and warning the criminals before the latter could be run to earth.

The bushrangers invariably worked in small gangs of four or five, under the command of various leaders, who seemed to exercise complete control over their followers, and they generally began their career by stealing good horses—racers by preference—on which they could make their escape to the mountain - ranges, where pursuit was almost impossible. Although they carefully avoided shedding blood or ill-treating those who surrendered quietly, they had no scruple whatever in taking the life of any man or woman who resisted them, and it was this relentless kind of murder that struck cold fear into the hearts of even the bravest men attacked by them. The bushranger was never known to hesitate. When he stood out in the road and cried 'Bail up!' with his pistol levelled at the head of some digger carrying his gold-dust to the bank, that man knew that, unless he threw his arms above his head at the instant, he would have a bullet in his brain as sure as fate. It took some time to acquire this deadly experience. In the early days of bushranging, when half a

dozen men sprang upon a digger who was carrying a fortune on him, and shouted 'Hands up!' or 'Bail up!' he would tell them to go to a bad place, and feel for his own revolver. But before he could get his hand to his waist he was a dead man, and his body lay in the dust, ticketed with a warning to all rash fellows who should dare to disobey a bushranger. After a long series of such cold-blooded murders, only those men who loved their gold more than life would hesitate about the throwing-up of hands.

The bushrangers had another ugly way of enforcing obedience. If their prisoners showed any signs of restlessness while their pack-saddles were being searched, they were promptly tied up to the nearest trees under pain of being shot if they resisted further. It was not pleasant to be 'tied up' on a Bush path, ten miles, perhaps, from the nearest squatter's hut and fifty from the nearest town or settlement. The long, wailing 'Coo-ees!' of those poor abandoned wretches might never reach the ears of a friendly human being, and grew faint and fainter until they ended in the gasp of death. There are many records of men left like this in the lonely Bush, having been starved to death, or stung to death by the terrible red ants, or turned raving mad before help reached them. Most people preferred to surrender unconditionally, and to sit still and quiet while they were robbed of all their wealth, rather than run the risk of being tied up or shot like a dog. One must realize this loneliness and isolation of life in the early days of Australia, and the wildness of the Bush and hills before one can understand the daring exploits of the bushrangers and the little resistance that was offered them.

Rough and brutal men as most of them were, they had sufficient good sense to avoid violence when not strictly a necessity, from their point of view, and to keep on good terms, as far as possible, with people who were not worth robbing. Some of them, indeed, like 'Jackey Jackey' (the gentleman bushranger, as he was called), Captain Melville, Johnny Gilbert, Frank Gardner, and other famous characters

of this chapter in Australian history, had a certain rough chivalry and good-humoured generosity which, in spite of their crimes, made them popular heroes with the most ignorant and lawless classes of colonial life, and were not altogether hated by people of superior intelligence. They never on any consideration offered ill-treatment to women, nor would they, as a rule, take money or goods from poor people. They had a tender regard for their honour in this respect. Frank Gardner, for instance, who had been accused of stealing things from the poor, wrote an indignant letter to a local newspaper repudiating the 'slander.'

'Having seen a paragraph in one of the papers'—so runs this remarkable communication—'wherein it is said that I took the boots off a man's feet, and that I also took the last few shillings that another man had, I wish it to be made known that I did not do anything of the kind. The man who took the boots was in my company, and for so doing I discharged him the following day. Silver I never took from a man yet. As for a mean, low, or petty action, I never committed it in my life.' This regard for his personal honour on the part of a man who was guilty of many robberies on a large scale is by no means an exceptional trait in the character of the Australian bushrangers. As an example of the generous way in which some of them conducted their 'business,' the story is told of Ned Kelly, who returned a gold watch to one of his victims when the man said, 'It is a keepsake from my dead mother. I should be sorry to lose it.'

On several occasions when gangs of bushrangers 'stuck up' a hotel after robbing a Government mail, or after taking a haul of gold-dust, they stood 'drinks all round' to their prisoners (first threatening to shoot every man Jack if they tried to give information to the police), and passed a jovial evening with music and song.

In the early days of bushranging Tasmania, or Van Diemen's Land, as it was then called, was the happy hunting-ground of the most desperate gangs, mostly old convicts or

runaways. The most notorious of their leaders was Michael Howe, generally entitled the 'King of the Rangers.' He waged war upon the scattered settlements, and became such a terror that many isolated farmers and their families had to desert their homes and remove for safety to the towns. The evil demanded the sternest measures of justice, and Governor Arthur proclaimed martial law throughout the colony, and executed more than a hundred bushrangers within a period of two years.

For ten years preceding 1830 New South Wales was also notorious for the number of its bushrangers, and a stringent Act had to be passed for the punishment of this class of crime. In the Bathurst district fifty armed men fought regular engagements with the police and ravaged the property of the settlers with the utmost audacity, until they were captured by a regiment of soldiers sent down from Sydney. Ten men were executed, and this severe lesson checked the wholesale character of these crimes, but for many years small parties of bushrangers still continued their outrages.

One of the most famous achievements of these wild days in Australia was the capture of the gold escort from the McIvor gold-field. A very valuable load of gold-dust was being conveyed to Melbourne under the guard of a body of mounted police. At one part of the road there was a sudden bend. A fallen tree brought the escort to a standstill until the obstruction could be removed. Suddenly from above the bank a volley of rifle-shots rang out, wounding several of the horses. The escort was caught in a trap, but they pluckily emptied their revolvers in the direction from whence the shots had come, although nothing could be seen except the thick bushes. Then another volley was fired, and several of the police were seriously wounded. A man named Warner, who was in command of the escort, galloped off to call for a rescue, and succeeded in making his escape, although a bullet reached his horse. Meanwhile, however, a dozen bushrangers jumped down from the steep bank, and while some held the horses'

heads and covered the drivers with their pistols, others seized the heavy boxes of gold and dragged them off to the scrub. Unfortunately for themselves, they had no time to pack the precious stuff on to their own horses before they were alarmed for their safety by a rescue party. They abandoned the greater quantity of their booty, but got off on foot to a hiding-place in the ranges with gold to the value of £5,000.

Some time afterwards one member of the gang was arrested on board ship before starting for England, and to save his own neck he turned informer. Three men were subsequently captured and hanged, but the others escaped, and very little of the gold was recovered.

Between 1850 and 1860—the days of ‘the roaring fifties,’ as that time was called—even the streets of Melbourne were not safe from the bushrangers, who came in with open defiance of the police, and committed many highway robberies with violence. During the same time the roads from the gold-mines at Bendigo and Ballarat were infested with these ruffians, and many a poor fellow, who had laboured for years in making his ‘little pile,’ was robbed of all the fruits of his labour at one fell blow. The Government did its utmost to put an end to this epidemic of crime; but the mounted police were far too few to cope with the desperadoes, who shot them down from carefully-laid ambushes, or fled to inaccessible hiding-places as soon as the police approached in any strength. Not content with ‘bailing up’ diggers, ‘holding up’ mail-coaches, and attacking gold escorts, the bushrangers took possession of small towns and raided the banks.

At Ballarat, for instance, one gang forced their way into the Bank after office hours, under pretext of cashing a small cheque, and, overpowering the cashier and other officials, compelled them, under pain of death, to unlock the safe, from which they rifled over £14,000 in notes and sovereigns, besides 350 ounces of gold.

Later on, Ned Kelly, known as the ‘Last of the Bush-rangers,’ achieved a similar and even more successful exploit

at the National Bank of Euroa. Mr. Robert Scott, the manager, had received warning that an attempt would be made to 'stick up' his bank, and had taken the precaution of laying in a store of arms. But by a clever piece of strategy the bushrangers succeeded in gaining an entrance, and then coolly told Scott to throw up his hands. 'It's no good resisting,' he said; 'I'm Ned Kelly, and you probably know my reputation.'

Poor Scott was not within arm's length of his revolver, and to save his life had to submit and hand over booty to the value of nearly £2,000. Kelly then went into the manager's private house, and insisted on Mr. and Mrs. Scott and their child accompanying him in their buggy to the outskirts of the town, where the rest of the gang had taken possession of the railway-station, after cutting the telegraph-wires and tearing up a part of the rails. Here a number of men had already been taken prisoners, and after they had all been given tea and treated with the utmost friendliness, they were forced to promise not to move away from the building for three hours after the bushrangers had decamped.

The career of Frank Gardner, whose letter to a local newspaper has been reproduced on a preceding page, was an extraordinary romance of crime. When a mere boy he was sentenced to 'five years' imprisonment for horse-stealing in Victoria, but he succeeded in escaping from the convict prison, and took to the Bush, like so many other 'old hands,' as the convicts were called. According to people to whom he 'introduced' himself in a polite but forcible manner, he was inspired rather with a love of adventure than with ordinary criminal instincts. Be that as it may, however, this lad soon became notorious for his daring achievements. He was joined by another youth, named Johnnie Gilbert, with two men, named Dunn and O'Meally, and innumerable robberies were committed by this gang. They were known to have 'bailed up' six mail-coaches, besides forcing scores of travellers to give up their money. On June 18, 1862, they

surpassed all former achievements by attacking the gold escort from the Lachlan diggings. Over 5,500 ounces of gold, valued at £21,000, besides coin and bank-notes worth £7,400, were packed inside the coach, which was driven by a man named John Fagan and guarded by three policemen. A fierce encounter took place when the bushrangers, who on this occasion were eight in number, sprang out into the road with the well-known shout of 'Hands up!' The escort defended their precious baggage with valour and determination, but one of them was severely wounded and the others were overpowered after a furious struggle. The coach was then ransacked and the booty was divided into eight equal parts by the bushrangers, who set off for a hiding-place in the hills. Fortunately the news of the outrage soon reached the police headquarters, and a body of well-mounted men set off in hot pursuit of the robbers. The chase was a long and stern one, until the bushrangers' horses, overloaded by the weight of the gold, dropped down in a state of exhaustion. The bushrangers were thus compelled to abandon most of their plunder, and endeavoured to escape on foot. Four of them, however, were captured and brought up for trial. Amazing as it seems, the first jury, with the full facts of guilt before them, refused to bring in a verdict to that effect, and such was the extraordinary state of public opinion in Australia at that time, that when a second jury was found to bring in a true verdict, nearly 16,000 people put their signatures to a petition received by the Governor, praying that the lives of the bushrangers might be spared.

Frank Gardner himself had been lucky enough to escape, and some time afterwards, realizing, though too late, that 'honesty is the best policy,' he gave up bushranging for the less romantic business of store-keeping in Queensland. For two years he prospered as a respectable member of society, but at the end of that time he was recognised by one of his former victims, and promptly pounced upon by the police. It was no sentimental judge and jury who tried

this young ruffian. He was condemned to thirty-two years' penal servitude. When he had served ten years, however, another monster petition was forwarded to the Governor, and as an act of grace he was released.

Johnnie Gilbert, 'the boy bushranger' with whom he had been associated in the old days, had joined a gang led by another famous rogue named Ben Hall, and their crimes were so numerous and so audacious that the police vowed vengeance on them if they were ever tracked down.

In October of 1863 Johnnie Gilbert's gang, after some bold robberies at Bathurst, made their escape on stolen racers, and were next heard of at the little town of Canowindra. Shortly after midnight Mr. Robinson, of Robinson's Hotel, was awakened by a banging at his door, and upon putting his head out of the window and asking 'Who's that?' he was told to come down and open the door to 'the police.' As soon as he obeyed the command, unsuspecting of danger, he was greeted with a shout of 'Bail up!' The man surrendered, and the bushrangers, marching in, ordered the family, servants, and lodgers out of bed, and made them all assemble in the dining-room. The robbers were in excellent good-humour, however, and promised to do no harm if everybody 'played fair.' They ordered refreshments, which they paid for 'on the nail,' and handed drinks all round. When morning came they left a guard at the dining-room door with instructions to shoot anybody who tried to escape, and posted themselves on the verandah and in the bar to await any townsfolk or travellers who might come to the hotel.

No less than fourteen bullock-drivers were captured as they came in and thrust into the dining-room with the other prisoners. Then three horsemen who came riding up were 'bailed up' in the same quiet way and marched off to the place of imprisonment, which was now getting very crowded. The next act of the bushrangers was to capture the solitary policeman stationed in the little town, and, with a rough sense of humour, they made him do 'sentry-go' outside the

hotel, with the promise of a bullet through his head if he 'got tired.'

By this time the inhabitants of the little town were aware of the extraordinary incidents taking place in their midst, but none of them were bold enough to lay siege to the hotel, which had now become the bushrangers' stronghold. Meanwhile Mrs. Robinson and her cook were released from the dining-room to prepare a first-class dinner for 'the gentlemen.' 'Do your best, and we'll pay,' said Johnnie Gilbert genially. For three days the bushrangers held the town of Canowindra, and passed what they considered a very enjoyable time at the Robinson Hotel. The prisoners, glum as they had been at first, and still a little nervous of these 'merry men' with loaded revolvers, made the best of the situation, and entered into the humour of it. One of the bullock-drivers had a concertina, and the bushrangers gave a selection of songs with great gusto, the company joining in the chorus. Then a dance was arranged, followed by various kinds of games. At night the women and children were allowed to go to bed, but the men had to sleep with their heads on the dining-room table, while the bushrangers took short naps turn and turn about. On the third day three of the gentlemen prisoners earnestly begged to be liberated as the river was in flood, and they were very anxious about their cattle. The bushrangers held a consultation on the subject, and eventually agreed that their request was a fair one. Doubtless, also, they had had enough of their 'spree,' and thought the game had lasted long enough. So the prisoners were liberated, and, settling up for everything in a handsome way, the bushrangers rode off from Canowindra in excellent spirits. For a long time the ruffians evaded every attempt at capture, but one night, after holding up a mail-coach, Johnnie Gilbert was followed by the police to a farmhouse. He fought desperately for dear life, but eventually he was shot down, and thus died, after an extraordinary number of wild adventures, when still only twenty-three years of age. Ben Hall, his confederate, was killed some time afterwards

in a similar way, his body being riddled with no less than thirty-three bullets.

Some years later—in 1879—Ned Kelly and three of his confederates emulated the most famous exploit of Johnnie Gilbert by ‘sticking up’ the town of Jerilderie, in New South Wales. There were about 200 inhabitants in the place, which was surrounded for miles by cattle-runs and sheep-farms. The chief buildings in the place were the Bank, the Police Station, Davidson’s Hotel, and the Court-house, which on Sunday was used as a place of worship. There was also a railway-station through which a good deal of traffic passed during certain periods of the year, and a post and telegraph office connected by wire with other small towns in that part of the colony. Ned Kelly, with his brother Dan and their two comrades, James Byrne and Steve Hart, went to work in a quiet and businesslike manner. They ‘bailed up’ the hotel manager, and locked up his family and guests. Then, when the alarm was given, and three policemen came up ‘to see what the row was,’ they were arrested one by one and disarmed and stripped of their uniforms, which the bushrangers put on over their own clothes. The post-office was next raided, and the telegraph-wires promptly cut. After that the bushrangers proceeded to the Bank, which they entered by the back door. Byrne, one of the gang, put a pistol at the head of the cashier before he was aware of danger. ‘I’m Kelly,’ he said, using the name of his chief, whose reputation was notorious all over the colony. The cashier held his hands over his head. ‘Where’s your pistols?’ asked the bushranger. ‘I’ve got none,’ said the cashier. As other officials and various clients entered the bank to begin the day’s work they were immediately ‘bailed up’ by Ned and Dan Kelly, and taken off to the hotel, where they were put under the charge of Steve Hart, in company with the other prisoners. Meanwhile Byrne, playing about with his pistol, was conducting business with the cashier, who, in fear and trembling, handed over his keys and gave full information as to the whereabouts of the treasure.

The robbers made a haul of £2,000, and with this booty upon them went about the town for three days with the utmost audacity, uttering threats of murder against a man who had made his escape from the bank, and intimidating the whole population, who appear to have been paralyzed with fear. It seems almost incredible that such a hardy lot as these cattle-drivers and sheep-farmers were should have been overawed by no more than four such ruffians. Ned and Dan Kelly, however, had several murders on their hands already, and there was no doubt that the first men who attempted to lay hands on them would be shot down to a dead certainty. Deplorable as it may seem to those who read of such things, no one was ambitious to be that first man !

From midnight on Saturday till the evening of the following Wednesday the bushrangers occupied Jerilderie ; then, satisfied with their plunder of the bank, they rode out of the town by separate ways to meet at a secret rendezvous as soon as they were safe from being followed.

The news of this outrage caused the greatest indignation throughout Australia, and the Governments of New South Wales and Victoria vied with each other in offering rewards for the capture of the Kelly gang, or any one of them, dead or alive. These combined rewards reached a total of £8,000, or £2,000 a head, and never in the whole history of bushranging had such a big price been put on any of these ruffians. For more than a year the men escaped capture, the secret of their whereabouts being kept from the police by their relatives and 'sympathizers,' many of whom were arrested and imprisoned on a charge of harbouring the criminals.

A man named Sherritt, in the hope of gaining the huge reward, succeeded in getting friendly with Mrs. Byrne, the wife of James Byrne, the bushranger, and for some time played the spy with the view of finding out where her husband and his comrades lay in hiding. His intentions were discovered, and he had to ask the police to protect his house. But the Kelly gang vowed vengeance on 'the traitor,' and one night in June,

1880, they seized hold of one of Aaron Sherritt's friends, handcuffed him, and marched him off to the hut where the former spy and a party of policemen were living. Then, under a threat of being shot, the prisoner was ordered to shout out 'Aaron!' The man did so, and Sherritt, recognising the voice, came to the door to see what was wanted. Without a word Byrne drew his pistol and, with unerring aim, shot the man dead. The bushrangers then called on the police to come out and 'fight like men.' But while the bushrangers were in darkness, the police were in the light of the room, with its ruddy fire and bright lamp. To have appeared at the door would have meant instant death, as Sherritt had died. So they kept inside, and the four outlaws, after emptying their pistols at the hut without effect, made off into the woods and disappeared.

They were brought to bay not long afterwards at the little town of Glenrowan, in Northern Victoria, which they had 'stuck up' in their old audacious way. Here they had taken possession of the Glenrowan Arms, kept by a Mrs. Ann Jones, and in addition to the hostess, with her family and servants, these four men had taken prisoners no less than sixty-four inhabitants of Glenrowan, driving them like sheep to the hotel, and keeping them in close confinement. This done, they proceeded to tear up the railway-lines and generally to prepare for a siege. One part of these preparations was certainly of a unique character. Out of numerous plough-shares some friendly and ingenious blacksmith had made them complete suits of armour, calculated, from its solidity, to resist anything less than cannon-shot. It covered every part of their bodies except the lower limbs, and their heads were covered by iron pots, with slits for the eyes, and breathing-holes. It was afterwards found that one of these extraordinary suits of iron weighed no less than 97 pounds!

When news reached the authorities of this new outrage by the Kelly gang a strong party of police proceeded to the scene of action with instructions to capture the bushrangers at all hazard or cost. The hotel was surrounded, and the police fired

Ned Kelly himself survived his wounds, and was hanged in Melbourne Gaol on November 11, 1880, as he richly deserved. Before his execution mass meetings were held in various parts of Australia to protest against the death penalty, and petitioning the Government to exercise the prerogative of mercy; but this strange sentimentality for a man guilty of several murders and of a long career of 'robbery under arms' was wisely disregarded by the authorities.

Kelly was really the 'last of the bushrangers,' and with his death there came to an end the long series of crimes which makes such a dark, though romantic, chapter of Australian history.

CHAPTER XLV

THE NEW NATION

'HAPPY is the country,' says an old proverb, 'that has no history.' In that respect Australia, of all countries in the world, should be the happiest. There is a good deal of romance, as we have seen, in the story of Australian exploration and of the old mining camps, and there is still romance of a peaceful and picturesque kind in the lives of the Australian stock-riders and sheep-farmers, but of history in the ordinary sense of the word, which generally means bloodshed and political strife, there is singularly little to record. The natives of Australia were too few in numbers and too wretched in their conditions of life to cause any such danger and warfare as existed for a long time in the New Zealand and South African colonies.

It is reckoned that when the first settlers arrived in New South Wales there were about 150,000 blackfellows throughout the whole of the vast continent, and these were scattered over the country in small wandering tribes, divided from each other by impassable deserts or mountain-ranges, so that they had no power of combining against the white invaders. Even among many of these tribes there was no great bond of union or strict discipline under a common chief. They were separated into

families, who roamed from place to place, getting a precarious existence by hunting and fishing, sheltering themselves in caves or huts of leaves and twigs, but never staying for more than a few days in one place. They were almost at the lowest scale of human nature, and had not the intelligence of some brutes, who hoard up the fruits of summer for their winter needs. The majority of blackfellows had no sense of thrift or foresight, gorging themselves into a diseased condition during the summer months and starving for the rest of the year. Going for the most part stark naked, they shivered miserably, and contracted all kinds of chest complaints during the wet and cold seasons, while in times of drought, the great curse of Australia, even with the most civilized methods of irrigation, many of them perished like helpless animals from hunger and thirst.

As a rule, after their first hostilities towards the early explorers, they became reconciled to the presence of white men, or at least saw the futility of warlike resistance. Unfortunately, nothing could cure their thieving instincts, and although the majority of squatters would have been willing enough 'to live and let live,' they were exasperated by the constant loss of sheep and cattle owing to raids of hungry blacks. Naturally, being rough-and-ready men, they showed little mercy to the robbers when they could catch them, and in some cases undoubtedly their vengeance was swift and cruel. Now and again the blackfellows retaliated with equal cruelty, and there are many stories from those early days of a solitary bushman riding carelessly through the woods until suddenly surrounded by a group of savages, who had crept upon his track, and at a given signal from their leader sprang out and clubbed him to death.

It was this kind of tragedy that hardened the heart of the squatter against the blackfellow, so that in many cases the mere glimpse of a black skin hiding beneath the rushes by the river-bank or moving like a shadow in the scrub was sufficient justification, at least to the conscience of a stock-rider or a shepherd, to shoot the poor wretch 'on sight.' Yet, on the other hand,

many of the natives took kindly to the white man's form of life, and were good servants to him on field, farm, and homestead, as faithful as dogs to the master, and kindly, simple playmates to the master's children. Unfortunately, like most savage races, they showed a far greater aptitude for learning the white man's vices than his virtues, and the Australian natives who became farm-servants and shepherds were much too fond of the 'fire-water.' Drunkenness was a common vice among them, and they acquired other habits that had the effect of ruining their health. They also had a fatal facility of catching the white men's diseases, and both consumption and small-pox claimed, and still claim, many victims among them. These causes of degeneracy had the effect of rapidly reducing the native population of Australia, and at the present time they are fast approaching total extinction.

Having no native wars to contend with was, of course, an immense factor in the rapid progress of Australian prosperity. Very different indeed would have been its history if such tribes as those in South Africa had roamed over the pastures and the gold-fields of New South Wales and Victoria.

One of the most important events in the early history of the Australian colonies was the abolition, during the governorship of Sir George Gipps, of the hideous old system of transportation. Although the foundations of the colonies were partly due to the convict settlements, the days had long gone by when convicts and freed men formed the bulk of the population and the source of labour. By the year 1840 a new nation had sprung into being in Australia, though not yet united under a common Government—a nation of enterprising, self-reliant men and women of good old British stock and untarnished record. They were justly proud of their prosperity, rightfully jealous of their colony's good repute, and the first use they made of the constitutions granted to them by the British Government was to protest in strong and determined terms against the further introduction of undesirable citizens.

By an Order in Council of the Imperial Government, the

system of transportation was formally abolished in 1840, but nine years later there was a foolish and dishonourable attempt to revive it. The English prisons were overcrowded with felons, and there was a small but noisy minority in Australia anxious to obtain cheap convict labour. The British Government decided, therefore, to send out a convict ship to Melbourne in spite of the most determined opposition in the colony of Victoria. When the convict ship, the *Hashemy*, as she was called, entered Port Phillip, the harbour was crowded with throngs of excited townsmen, who expressed their firm resolve to defy all attempts at landing. The Governor took the part of the citizens, and also refused to show any hospitality to the convicts.

In the face of such resistance, the officers in command of the *Hashemy* could think of nothing better to do than to sail off to Port Jackson, where they hoped to get a better reception from the people of Sydney. But in this they were very much mistaken. The whole town was in a state of the wildest excitement, and for weeks previously there had been heated public meetings of the Anti-transportation League denouncing the 'outrage' contemplated by the British Government. There is no doubt that violent work would have been done if the naval officers had attempted to land the convicts, but they had the wisdom not to force matters to a crisis which might lead to bloodshed. Eventually a compromise was effected, and for the sake of the convicts themselves, who would otherwise have been in a very desperate plight, they were allowed to get on shore at Brisbane, and distributed among the farmers as 'assigned servants.' But another petition, signed by many thousands of colonists, was forwarded to the Imperial Parliament, with the result that never again did a convict land on the Australian coast.

A few words must now be said about the form of constitutional government acquired in course of time by the Australian people. Trial by jury had been established in New South Wales as far back as 1824, previous to which offenders had

been tried by a military court. Then a small Legislative Council, at first of seven members, and afterwards increased to fifteen, was nominated by the Crown to advise and to control the Governor in his administrative capacity. This was a considerable step forward in constitutional progress, as previously the Governor had had absolute and autocratic power. But a much larger measure of self-government was necessary for such a free and enterprising colony as New South Wales, and in 1843 the Legislative Council was increased to thirty-six members, twelve of whom were nominated by the Crown, and the remaining majority elected by the people. At that time New South Wales included the present colonies of Queensland to the north, and Victoria to the south, but the colonists in those great territories were of opinion that they would be more independent if they dissociated themselves from the middle State.

Accordingly Victoria separated from New South Wales in 1851, and Queensland in 1859. In spite of this, New South Wales was still the strongest and most prosperous colony in Australia, and it was right that it should be the first to acquire the most advanced form of self-government under the Crown.

In 1855 a constitution was drawn up and approved by the Imperial Parliament, by which an assembly elected by the people was established, resembling our own House of Commons in its functions and responsibilities, while the Executive was formed by a nominated Council in the same way as the British Cabinet. The colonists of New South Wales were, therefore, fully provided with the power of regulating their own colonial affairs, and passing the laws which they considered best for their own welfare without interference from the British Government, which only reserved to itself the prerogative of dealing with subjects of Imperial and international importance.

In the course of a few years the other colonies of Australia followed suit, setting up their own councils and assemblies. In this book there is no need to give any details of the political measures adopted or annulled by these various

Colonial Governments. As a recent Australian historian has observed, politics and the rise and fall of Ministries did not have any deep effect upon the life of the people, who went on quietly with their work of farming, or mining, or sheep-rearing, or whatever their occupation might be, irrespective of what their Government might do or not do, and it was upon the individual energy and enterprise of the colonials that the prosperity of Australia was built up. They certainly took a keen interest in politics, and followed the newspaper controversies with attention, but it was rather in the same sort of way that they took an interest and found excitement in the game of cricket. Nevertheless, the various Governments have done a very great deal in developing the resources of their colonies and undertaking public works—railways, bridges, harbours, telegraphs, and so on—in a spirit of industrial enterprise and patriotic ambition. Indeed, it may be said that during later years they erred rather on the side of extravagance and over-development, exhausting their treasuries by enormously expensive public works, hardly justified even by the rapid prosperity of their colonies.

In colonizing, as in all other kinds of business, it is very necessary to 'cut your coat according to your cloth.' Two or three of the Australian Governments 'cut their coats' some sizes too big, and during the latter years of the nineteenth century their colonies went through a period of severe financial depression, when they were called upon to pay those expensive 'tailor's bills.'

The division of Australia into separate colonies, instead of being united under one central Government, had many drawbacks to the prosperity of the nation as a whole, chief of which were the Customs duties existing between them. To convey goods across the boundary of New South Wales and Victoria, the colonists on both sides had to pay a heavy toll, and the system of 'robbing Peter to pay Paul' was prevalent throughout the colonies, to the detriment of trade and of commercial enterprise. From a higher point of view, it was

greatly to be desired that the people of Australia should be bound together in common, social, industrial, and political union, so that they might take their place as a nation among the great countries of the world.

For many years some of the leading minds in Australia had been advocating some system of federation, and the various Governments had, though in a lukewarm manner, given a certain amount of consideration to this idea. The first practical step towards this end was taken when a Federation Council was called together at Hobart, in 1886, to which the various colonies were invited to send delegates. This Council, which had no executive power whatever, being only an assembly for discussion and deliberation, was badly attended, and New South Wales was entirely unrepresented. It was therefore a complete failure *per se*, yet it had the effect of stimulating the imagination of the Australians in the great ideal of Federation, and arousing the increased interest of legislators.

Various official and unofficial conferences were held between 1890 and 1897, and in the latter year a great Federal Convention was opened at Adelaide, to which all the colonies save Queensland sent delegates for drawing up a scheme whereby they might become united in a national Commonwealth. During the course of their deliberations Queensland expressed its desire to join, and eventually a Commonwealth Bill was put before the whole of the Australian people, to be voted for by a general 'referendum' to the electors. By this Bill it was proposed to establish a Federal Parliament, consisting of two Houses—the Senate and the House of Representatives—both to be elected by the people, while the Commonwealth of Australia, as the new nation would be called, should be represented by a Governor-General, appointed by the Sovereign. The Federal Government would assume the power of administering the departments of Customs and Excise, of ports and telegraphs, of naval and military Defence, and of regulating taxation, while its first duty would

be to establish free trade, without any intercolonial duties, throughout the Commonwealth. With the consent of the various States, the colonial railways might also be taken over by the Federal authority. To put the matter briefly, it may be said that the Commonwealth would raise Australia to the rank of a united nation under one Government, with the same independence under the Crown as was possessed by the Dominion of Canada. This great Bill fell through at the first referendum owing to a minority of votes in New South Wales. At a second referendum, however, in 1899 this colony adopted the proposals by a substantial majority, and there was no further political hindrance to a complete federation of Australia.

Some time necessarily elapsed before the new Commonwealth could be inaugurated, and meanwhile the war in South Africa broke out, and absorbed the entire interest of the Empire. For the first time in our colonial history the mother-country called upon her younger nations for assistance in a great crisis, and for the first time in the history of the world the meaning of the British Empire was made manifest. In those dark days when the British army in South Africa sustained many severe reverses, and when our enemies prophesied the downfall of the Empire, England realized that in her colonies she had a source of strength hitherto undreamt of. Blood, after all, is thicker than water, and although in peace Canada and Australia had seemed occupied entirely with their own interests, and the links of Empire had seemed very frail, it was found that, in time of danger to the parent nation, the colonies were proud to send their sons to uphold the honour of the flag, eager to cement the bonds of Empire with their best blood.

Throughout Australia a great wave of patriotic enthusiasm stirred the hearts of the colonists. The opportunity had at last come to show that they could send out men as well as mutton to the country from whence they had sprung. From New South Wales and Victoria, South Australia, West

Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania, the War Office in Pall Mall was deluged with offers of mounted men, who could ride hard and shoot straight. As all the world knows, England did not discourage the loyalty of her sons, and wherever there was hard work to be done in South Africa there the Imperial Bushmen and Mounted Infantry rode, scouted, and fought with a gallantry that won them golden honours. As the stories of their exploits and the roll-call of their dead throbbed across the wires to the land of the Southern Cross the Australian people were filled with a sense of pride and gladness in the brotherhood of Empire and in their own manhood.

Local patriotism, the jealousy between colony and colony, their feelings of isolation from the mother-country, were extinguished by the blood that was shed upon the African veldt, and Australia felt the throb of exultation in the thought that as a Commonwealth she would take a high place among the nations of the world and in the councils of the Empire.

On the first day of 1901 the Australian Commonwealth was inaugurated with joyous ceremony and popular enthusiasm. It was a gala day, not only in Sydney, where the great ceremony took place, but in every city and town and homestead throughout the island continent. Flags fluttered in every street and from every house, and over many a lonely farmhouse in the Bush, there waved a Union Jack and the flag of the Southern Cross. Sydney was thronged with nearly a million people, many of whom had come from thousands of miles across scrub and desert to swell the cheers that greeted the birth of the new nation.

Lord Hopetoun, the first Governor-General of the Commonwealth, presided over the inaugural ceremony, driving down a line of troops several miles long to the imperial pavilion, where he was received with a salute of nineteen guns. Then, amid the deep silence of the great concourse, a prayer, written by Lord Tennyson, the son of the Poet Laureate, was offered up by the Archbishop, and the blessing of God was invoked

for the nation that had sprung into being after long years of travail:

‘We beseech Thee, grant unto this union Thy grace and heavenly benediction, that a strong people may arise to hallow Thy name, to do justly, and to love mercy.

‘We pray Thee to make our Empire always a faithful and fearless leader among the nations in all that is good, and to bless our beloved Queen, and those who are put in authority under her, more especially in this land.

‘Let Thy wisdom be their guide; strengthen them in uprightness, and vouchsafe that all things may be so ordered and settled upon the best and surest foundation, that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, may be deepened and increased among us.’

So with much impressive ceremony and sincere jubilation did the Australian people proclaim their Commonwealth. On May 6 of that year the Prince and Princess of Wales arrived at Melbourne, and with a ceremony and enthusiasm not less than had been witnessed at the inauguration the first Federal Parliament, was opened and began the business of the Commonwealth, with the Right Hon. Edmund Barton as its Premier.

Wonderful, indeed, has been the progress of Australia since those days when a crowd of felons were landed at Port Jackson in January, 1788. One of the greatest countries in the world had been inhabited and brought to a high state of civilization and prosperity, in not much more than a single century, by the courage, endurance, and industry of British manhood. Most of the great work had been accomplished, indeed, during the latter half of the nineteenth century, when vast tracts of the great Bush had been converted into waving cornfields, when the great pasture-lands had been stocked with enormous flocks and herds of sheep and cattle, when the earth had been ransacked for its treasures, when the mysteries of the interior had been solved by daring pioneers, when railways and telegraphs had linked up the north with the south,

the east with the west, and when magnificent cities had risen upon land where not long before the crocodile had wallowed in its slime and the naked blackfellow had roamed in wretchedness.

Surely a great and noble future lies before this new nation, which has sprung from such hardy stock, and has all the vigour, the health, and the enthusiasm of youth.

PART VII

NEW ZEALAND AND HER PEOPLE

CHAPTER XLVI

COOK AND HIS FOLLOWERS

IN the story of Australia it has already been told how the Dutch navigator Tasman, voyaging in search of the mythical 'Great South Land,' was the first European to come in touch with the New Zealand coast, and how afterwards Captain James Cook explored the North and Middle Islands, taking possession of them in the name of King George III. On Cook's first voyage he endeavoured to establish friendly relations with the native tribes, but there was suspicion on both sides which prevented free intercourse and led to two or three tragedies. On one occasion, when the crew of the *Endeavour* had anchored in the middle of a river, a party of Maoris pursued some English boys in a yawl, separated from the other part of the crew. The coxswain fired a gun over their heads, which startled them considerably, but after a few moments of consternation one of them prepared to hurl his spear at the boys, upon which the gun was fired again, and killed the warrior. His comrades dragged the body away for some distance, but then dropped it and fled. Shortly afterwards, when the crew had landed on the banks of the river, they saw some Maoris on the opposite bank engaged in a war-dance. Cook had taken with him a native Tahiti named Tupia, and this lad now spoke to them in his own tongue,

telling them they need have no fear of the white men, as they intended no harm. To Cook's surprise and pleasure it was evident the New Zealand natives understood the language addressed to them, and they at once became friendly. About thirty of them swam across to the white men, who gave them presents and tolerated their curiosity with good-humour.

But the Maoris became somewhat audacious now that they had recovered from their first alarm, and endeavoured to get hold of the English weapons, which immediately attracted their notice. 'One of them,' said Cook, 'snatched Mr. Green's hanger from him, and would not give it up; this encouraged the rest to be more insolent, and seeing others coming over to join them, I ordered the man who had taken the hanger to be fired at, which was accordingly done, and he was wounded in such a manner that he died soon after.' Some small shot was then fired at the others, who plunged into the river and swam away with quick, strong strokes.

A day or two later Cook pursued some canoes with the purpose of speaking to the natives, and fired a gun over their heads to stop them, but, naturally enough, they thought he had hostile intentions, and, being brave men, they turned and attacked Cook's boat. It was now necessary to fire upon them, and two or three were killed, while three jumped overboard. These were caught and brought on board the English boat, where they were treated with such kindness that, like children, they quickly forgot their fears and the death of their comrades, and became very merry and delighted with all they saw.

Cook had some twinges of conscience for the way in which he had fired at their canoe, and attempted to justify this action. 'Had I thought that they would have made the least resistance I would not have come near them; but as they did I was not to stand still and suffer either myself or those who were with me to be knocked on the head.'

There was another distressing incident of this sort further along the coast, when the second lieutenant, Mr. Gore, killed

a Maori because, after bargaining for some cloth, he made off with it without giving up the native mat he had offered in exchange. Captain Cook, in making a note of this occurrence, gave his opinion that 'the punishment was a little too severe for the crime.' On reading of these incidents one is inclined to feel that the crew of the *Endeavour*, as well as Captain Cook himself, were not sufficiently careful in avoiding unnecessary bloodshed, and that they paid too little regard to the value of native life. On the whole, however, Captain Cook was in advance of his age in this respect, and the unhappy incidents related are counterbalanced by his general humanity and consideration for the New Zealand people. Finding that they had a scarcity of animal food, he left behind some pigs, goats, and sheep. He also presented to some friendly chiefs a stock of potatoes, and explained the way in which they should be cultivated. The sheep seem to have disappeared, probably being eaten as soon as Cook had sailed off, but the pigs and goats increased in large numbers, their descendants becoming wild breeds, different both in appearance and habits to the domestic animals. The potatoes were carefully sown and tended, and their first crop was afterwards consumed with great ceremony and rejoicing, while the blessings of the Maori gods were invoked upon the white men who had brought the seed.

Towards the end of Cook's first voyage round the coast of New Zealand he was able to establish more cordial relations with the Maori tribes, whom he found to be a fine and dignified people, warlike and proud, but generally trustworthy and friendly when treated with respect. Among themselves they seemed to be constantly fighting in a fierce intertribal warfare, and they made no secret of the fact that they indulged in cannibalism, believing that to eat the body of a hostile warrior who had been killed in battle endowed them with all the power he had possessed in life. They had also many customs and superstitions of which they were exceedingly jealous, and the violation of which aroused their utmost indignation and hatred. Many things and places, for instance,

were sacred or 'tapa,' and it was a deadly insult to touch them even in ignorance—a custom which caused many tragic deeds in later years, when white men came in greater numbers to New Zealand, and aroused fierce enmity among the Maoris by carelessly outraging these laws of caste and religion.

On Cook's second voyage to New Zealand with two ships, the *Resolution* and *Adventure*, the latter under command of Captain Furneaux, a dreadful tragedy took place, which was probably caused by some such reason. A boat's crew under a midshipman named Rowe was sent by Captain Furneaux, who reached New Zealand before Cook, into a small bay called Grass Cove, to gather some green plants, as an antidote against scurvy. As the boat did not return either that day or during the night considerable alarm was felt on the *Adventure*, and Lieutenant Burney, with another boat and armed crew, went off in search of the missing men. They rowed from cove to cove, firing guns to attract the attention of their comrades, if they still survived, and at last, upon entering Grass Cove, they saw a number of canoes drawn up on the beach, and a crowd of Maoris in a state of great excitement. The native warriors brandished their clubs at the sailors as soon as they saw their boat, and it was evident they were prepared to fight. Lieutenant Burney, upon getting within easy range, ordered his men to fire. 'The first volley did not seem to affect them very much, but on the second they began to scramble away as fast as they could, some of them howling. We continued firing as long as we could see any glimpse of them through the bushes.'

Two of the natives, who seemed to be chiefs, showed remarkable courage. They waited on the strand until they were deserted by all their men, and then, with the utmost dignity, walked away slowly, in spite of the volleys of musket-shots, as if they disdained to show any haste or fear.

A horrible sight now met the eyes of Burney and his crew as they searched the shore. They came across fragments of human flesh and bones littered on the beach, and picked up

a number of hands, among which they were able to recognise those of poor Rowe and another midshipman. They also found the head of Captain Furneaux's servant. It was evident that the crew of the *Adventure's* boat had been massacred by the natives, and that a cannibal orgy had taken place on the shore. Sickening and horrible though it was, Lieutenant Burney and his crew gathered up the fragments of their unfortunate comrades, and upon returning to the ship these remains were buried with reverence.

This seems to have been the solitary instance during Cook's second voyage of any hostility or treachery from the Maoris, and he obtained the warm friendship of several tribes whom he had previously met, and who showed the utmost pleasure upon seeing him again. Again he left various domestic animals and numerous kinds of vegetables, some of which were afterwards found flourishing by later travellers.

CHAPTER XLVII

THE TWO ISLANDS

THE two islands which Captain Cook explored so thoroughly along their coast-line are very different in character to the Australian continent, from which they are separated by 1,200 miles of sea. They also present strong contrasts to each other, both in physical features and climate. Viewed from the west or eastern coast, North Island, which has a much warmer climate than its neighbour, seemed to Captain Cook a land of wonderful forests, so luxuriant and thickly grown that the magnificent trunks of their myrtles, beeches, and pines impressed the keen-eyed sailor as offering inexhaustible supplies of timber for the ships and building purposes of the British Empire. At the present day many of those forests have disappeared, owing to the ruthless axe of the white settler, who cleared the ground of its giants in order to

pasture his flocks or raise his crops on the fertile soil beneath. But enough still remains to reveal the exquisite beauty of a New Zealand jungle, where the trees are intertwined with trailing tropical plants, the rope-like lianas and tangled creepers, garlanded with gorgeous and fantastic orchids, with flowering grasses and gigantic ferns.

Round the coast for about fifty miles inland there is good fertile ground of green hills and wooded plains, but then it rises into great ridges of mountainous country, running like a spine from north to south, the highest portion of which is a broad volcanic plateau dominated by the majestic peaks of Ruapehu, Tongariro, and Tarawera, still in active eruption, and smouldering like ever-burning torches in the clear tropical sky. Here on the north of this mountainous country there extends for 300 miles a chain of boiling geysers and steaming lakes, sulphur-basins and plains of pumice-stone—a district marvellous and awe-inspiring, where the great forces of Nature are seen at work as if in a seething and boiling cauldron, in which the very rocks are melted and the earth and water are in a state of primeval turmoil. Where the lava has been poured out of long-extinguished volcanoes and cooled into great masses of shining rock, magical and beautiful effects of colour are seen by the traveller, as if the earth were paved with burnished metal inlaid with brilliant jewels and patterns of delicate enamel. The pink and white terraces formed in this way by volcanic eruption were long one of the wonders of the world, but in 1886 the earth was upheaved by a tremendous explosion of steam given off by the boiling waters beneath Mount Tarawera, and one of those great cataclysms, which in the beginning of the world made the mountains and the valleys, shattered the famous terraces and buried the houses that had been built around them beneath a tumultuous chaos of rock. Long before the first white man set the imprint of his foot upon the soil of North Island the Maori tribes had known the medicinal value of the sulphur baths and hot springs of this region, and latterly

Europeans have come in thousands every year for the healing of many of the ills that flesh is heir to. Here also in North Island are numbers of great and silent lakes, and of smaller pools and ponds, some of them exquisite in their clear and limpid beauty, bright green, like emerald, or of deepest blue, and others steaming and sulphurous with yellowy vapour, or eddying with dark and turbulent mud. Greatest of these inland waters is Lake Taupo, twenty miles across each way, and called by the Maoris 'Te Moana' (the Sea). It is the source of the longest river in North Island, the Waikato, flowing into the western ocean at Manukau Harbour, and is navigable by small steamers for 100 miles from its mouth.

At one part of its course the river channel narrows to a sixth of its usual width, and its waters are hurled down steep ledges of rock, fast and furious, and lashed into white froth, falling into a deep pool below. This is the famous Haku Waterfall, one of many wonderful falls of the New Zealand rivers. All these streams which come down from the lakes on the mountain plateaux are swift and turbulent, and in times of flood, when the lakes overflow their boundaries, the rivers are converted into raging torrents, sweeping everything before them with irresistible force. Many a horse and rider have been hurled to death as they tried to cross the rocky bottoms of the channels before the days of bridges in New Zealand, and thousands of poor cattle have been drowned by the sudden rush of water from the mountain heights.

Not far away from Lake Taupo is Waikaremona, 'the Sea of the Rippling Waters,' surrounded by great forests and by tumbled rocks covered with tangled plants and tropical flowers. On the western side of the great mountainous ridge, which runs from north to south of the island, there are splendid tracts of country which provide about 13,000,000 acres of land as perfect as any in the world for farming purposes, and other great regions where the soil is not fertile enough for corn-growing, but which is excellent for pastoral purposes.

To the south-west of Lake Taupo is the valley of the Wanganui, the most beautiful river in North Island, flowing through scenery of green pasture-lands, of wooded hills and mountain slopes, above which great barren rocks are carved by Nature into shapes that in the dusk resemble medieval fortresses with battlemented walls and high towers.

If the European traveller be reminded of the Rhine as he comes down this river of North Island—and the comparison is usual, though really the New Zealand scenery is grander than that of Germany—still more does his imagination find a resemblance to the majesty of the Swiss Alps in the mountain ranges of Middle Island, whose snow-capped peaks form a rocky barrier between east and west. Nearly two-thirds of the entire surface of this southern island are covered by great rocks piled high one above the other by some great upheaval when the world was young. Nothing can surpass the grand and awful beauty of these Southern Alps, where for hundreds of miles the sun glistens upon snow and ice fields lying close to the blue sky like banks of white cloud, and gleams upon rivers of burnished gold, where glacial torrents rush down to valleys clothed with dark forests of pines and firs. Here and there, standing high above the surrounding rocks, rises a tall and solitary peak, a mountain giant whose head is wreathed with fleecy cloudlets, and whose base is bathed by some broad and placid lake, reflecting the snow-clad slopes above, or darkened by the shadows of the woods.

To the north of Middle Island Mount Earnshaw, above Lake Wakatipu, and Mount Aspiring, above Lake Wanaka, rise to a height of 10,000 feet; and further north Mount Sefton and Mount Cook dominate the surrounding ranges, the last-named peak being the tallest in New Zealand, and having a height of 12,348 feet above the sea-level.

‘The beauty of the exquisite scenery,’ says Van Hoost, who first explored these mountains, ‘is still further heightened by the magnificent forest vegetation which covers the mountain-side for about 1,000 feet, succeeded above by alpine

vegetation, over and through which the rocky pinnacles, pyramids, and other masses, often shaped into fantastic forms, stretch towards the sky.'

But though the centre of Middle Island is thus mountainous and wild, magnificent rolling downs slope towards the sea on either side, well watered by the rivers that come down from the hills, fertilizing the rich soil of the plains, so that the great enemy of Australian agriculturists, the dreaded drought, is unknown in these happy lands, where the sheep-rearer can always find perfect pasture for his flocks, and where the industry of the farmer is rewarded quickly with fields of golden grain.

Along the east coast the Canterbury plains, famous for their mutton and wool, stretch for 100 miles, and when the first colonists came to this district they found their labours easy, for but few trees required clearing before the plough turned up the virgin soil. In the dry and sunny climate, with the earth watered by many streams, the settler found a paradise of ease and plenty.

Different was it on the western coast, where the rain-clouds broke against the mountains, and caused such constant moisture that vegetation grew rank and luxuriant, and great jungles had to be cleared by fire and axe before the good earth beneath would yield its richness and bear fruit. Here on the western coast the sea has pierced the cliffs by centuries of fretting, wearing them away into long fiords or sounds, and winding far among the mountain ranges with deep and narrow channels, silent and beautiful, beneath the overarching trees upon the tall cliffs above.

Around these northern sounds, which Tasman first sighted on his famous voyage of exploration in the Southern Seas, rugged and fantastic masses of rock tower into the sky, so curiously carved by natural forces that sailors, who are not the least imaginative of men, have found quaint resemblances, suggesting nicknames which have now found their way into maps and books of geography—the Devil's Armchair, Mount Gladstone, the Mitre Rock, the Patriarch, and so on. On the

lower slopes of the mountains, above these winding inlets, the New Zealand forest is seen in all its glory, thick and tangled with tropical vegetation, binding the giant trees with almost impenetrable undergrowth, flaming with orchids, brilliant with the blue and white clematis, and blazing with the gorgeous hues of exotic flowers, called by unfamiliar native names.

Now and again the channels broaden into deep lakes, silent pools of beauty, surrounded by waving reeds and feathery trees, and sometimes swift torrents rush down from the heights, tumbling with noisy revelry into the foaming waters, and forming fairy-like cascades of silvery brightness, amidst the deep verdure of their surroundings.

CHAPTER XLVIII

THE MAORI RACE

SUCH was the scenery of natural loveliness and magnificence in which the Maori people enacted the drama of their life. Savage though they might be called, according to the standard of civilization in the Western world, they were not unworthy of such a land. A handsome race, tall, strong, and well proportioned, they had the dignity as well as the simplicity of a people uncorrupted by many of those vices and follies which degrade humanity in more artificial states of society.

In the long ago, as their traditions still record and the researches of scientists have helped to prove, they had come thousands of miles across the ocean from the islands of Polynesia in search of new lands, impelled by the lack of food, or by defeat in war, or perhaps by the mere restlessness of youth and the inborn love of adventure, such as had inspired the Vikings of Scandinavia when 'the fury of the Northmen' descended upon the coasts of early Britain. The Maoris (which means 'the men') had dared the perils of the unknown sea in double

canoes, holding about 100 men and women, and in these long boats they reached the shores of New Zealand, finding an earthly paradise uninhabited by any people who would dispute their landing, or by any wild beasts who would fight for mastery with men in the forest. The names of these canoes in which the pioneers came to New Zealand were enshrined in historical tradition, and gave the titles to the different tribes whose forefathers had rowed in them. Such, at least, is the story which the Maoris tell themselves, and loyally believe, concerning the coming of their race to the two islands; but it is difficult to say how much is true or what is mythical.

It was in North Island that most of the Maori tribes established their tribal dominions, and Middle Island, at the time when the white men first explored it, was but sparsely populated. Here in North Island, therefore, the Maoris marked out the boundaries of their territories, at first, no doubt, by peaceable agreement, afterwards by fierce warfare, in which one tribe grasped the land of its neighbours, and extended its dominion by the power of the sword and the spear. Within the tribe itself, however, no one had private property in land. No Maori individual could put up a fence on a hedge with a notice that 'Trespassers will be prosecuted.' No Maori, not even the chief himself, might sell a square foot of soil except with the consent of the whole tribe. The land was a precious birthright, possessed as a common property, of which no man had a greater or a less share, and guarded as a sacred trust for his descendants. So also was it with the fruits of the earth. There was no buying or selling of the necessities of life. The ground was cultivated for the common weal, so that no man might obtain a monopoly or gorge while his neighbour starved. No Maori who did his duty as a warrior and as a father was ever in danger of starvation, for the chief was the dispenser of the common wealth, giving to each alike. It was a socialism such as men have dreamed of for simplifying the complexities of Western civilization, in which the goods of this world are so unevenly divided.

In this and in other ways the Maoris showed a democratic spirit. The chief did not obtain his position by accident of birth, or, as we call it, by 'hereditary right'; he had to prove himself worthy by valour in war and wisdom in counsel, when he was chosen by the general consent of his tribe. If at any time he disgraced himself, proving guilty of cowardice or treachery or injurious vice, he was liable to be deposed from his chieftainship, records proving that this was sometimes done.

The chief was endowed with a mysterious kind of attribute called *mana*, a term difficult to render into English, but conveying a meaning somewhat stronger than our words 'prestige' or 'influence.' The great duty of a chief was to increase his *mana* by every means in his power, especially by overthrowing his enemies and by personal heroism in the hour of danger. He might lose his *mana*, not only through his own fault, but by being wounded in the back, or buffeted on the head (which was peculiarly sacred to the person of a chief), or by suffering other indignities at the hands of his enemies. His most precious possession was the *mērū*, or short green stone sword, with which he slew his foe at close quarters. These *mērū*s were handed down as heirlooms from father to son through many generations, and the gift of one of them to a stranger was the greatest honour that could be paid.

All evidence goes to prove that the Maoris were, and the surviving tribes still are, of a high order of intelligence. They are especially remarkable for their gifts of poetry and oratory, and many of the poems which have been handed down from generation to generation are very beautiful in their imagery and musical rhythm. The magnificence and loveliness of their surroundings were not lost upon them, but they had a deep and passionate love for their native land, and its scenery inspired them with an intimate sense of the mystery and poetry of Nature, which found expression in national songs and epics not unworthy of comparison with the Nature-poems of the early Greeks. Their arts were primitive, and they had not advanced beyond the Stone Age when Captain Cook became acquainted

with them ; but even with their clumsy tools, fashioned out of the rocks, they were able to carve highly artistic patterns upon their war-canoes and the wooden shafts of their spears. Barbarous also as was their custom of tattooing the face and chest, it has been admitted that the wonderful spirals and curves with which they thought to adorn their flesh really showed a sense of beauty in line and design.

The greatest blot upon their characters was the cannibalism with which they celebrated their success in war. It required the greatest efforts of the English missionaries to make them see the horror of this practice, for they held strongly to the superstition that great *mana* could be acquired by eating the flesh of enemies killed in battle.

CHAPTER XLIX

SOUTH SEA RUFFIANS

SUCH, then, were the people who inhabited the islands of New Zealand, explored from end to end by Captain Cook, and it was doubtless owing to his reports upon their warlike character that partly deterred the British Government from seeking to found new colonies in this part of the world. But, apart from that, there was no great desire among British Ministers to extend the responsibilities of Empire. They were fully occupied with trouble in Europe and America, and the condition of convict settlements in Australia was not at that time so promising as to encourage further experiments in colonization.

For two generations, therefore, New Zealand was left out of account by the Government, in spite of Captain Cook having annexed the islands in the name of the King. Nevertheless, Orient adventurers and traders found their way thither without official sanction or encouragement, and the Bay of Islands on the north coast became the rendezvous of some of the roughest characters of mankind. They came as whalers and sealers.

and to barter knives and axes for the curious native weapons and ornaments which found a ready market in Europe. They also traded in another class of goods for which they could get high prices among the curio-collectors and museums of the Western world. This was a traffic in human heads, sun-baked and tattooed—the heads of unfortunate warriors secured as trophies in those fierce intertribal wars which were raging throughout the length and breadth of North Island.

Some of these South Sea sailors were brutes of the vilest and coarsest character, and there are many horrible tales of those early days when the Maori people first became familiar with the ways of white men.

A man named Thompson, master of a trading-ship called the *Boyd*, took on board his vessel a young chief named Tarra, known to the English as 'George.' He seems to have forced this native to undertake work which he considered degrading to his *mana*, and then flogged him for disobeying orders. The native secretly vowed vengeance, but concealed his hatred until he had his opportunity. Then, when the *Boyd* put into the harbour of his native place, 'George' went ashore and showed the stripes of his back to the members of his tribe. It has already been said that a chief's back was *tapu*, or sacred. The tribe swore to exact punishment for the outrage. When Thompson and some of his men went ashore they were murdered without mercy, and the Maoris then, dressing themselves up in the dead men's clothes, rowed out to the ship, and, scaling the side, put to death everyone on board with the exception of a woman and two children and a young lad who had been kind to the insulted chief. These were afterwards taken under the protection of an English missionary, assisted by the friendly chief named Ti-pa-he, belonging to another tribe.

Shortly after this massacre five whaling-ships put into the Bay of Islands, and, hearing the story, made a night attack upon Ti-pa-he's village in the belief that he had been an accessory to the deed. The chief himself escaped, wounded, but many of his warriors were killed, the village was burned, and

his crops destroyed. The survivors, of course, were now ranged upon the side of the real murderers of Thompson and the crew of the *Boyd*, and it was not long before they captured the crew of a whaling-boat entirely innocent of any share in the wretched business, killing every man and devouring the dead bodies with cannibal rites. Thus did the wanton violation of a chief's *mana* lead to a series of horrible murders.

Not less tragic is the story of another sea-captain named Stewart, in command of the brig *Elizabeth*. A famous chief named Rauparaha, who had long been the terror of the tribes in his vicinity, with whom he had waged a merciless war, was anxious to attack his greatest rival named Maranui, who dwelt with his people at a considerable distance along the coast. When the brig *Elizabeth* put into his bay, he bribed Stewart to take him on board with a number of his warriors, and convey them to Maranui's village. Stewart not only agreed to this, but when he arrived at the appointed place he enticed Maranui, with his wife and daughter and a few of his principal chiefs, to come on board, swearing that he had no Maoris with him, and offering to supply his visitors with firearms in return for native goods. They accepted the invitation in good faith, but no sooner were they on the *Elizabeth* than Rauparaha and his warriors sprang up the hatchway and hacked them to death, with the exception of the chief and his wife and little daughter, who were reserved for torture. On the shore, in Maranui's village, there was no suspicion as to the fate of their chiefs, but as night approached, Rauparaha and his band attacked the natives while they were unprepared for resistance, slaughtering men, women, and children, and setting fire to their houses. It has been asserted that Stewart and his crew took a part in this massacre. But, be that as it may, it is quite certain that the brutal captain allowed the warriors to bring on board his ship fragments of their enemy's flesh, let them cook it in his own pots, and watched the horrid orgies of the feast.

Another spectator of this awful scene was the chief Maranui, who, cruelly bound in the ship's irons, was forced

to watch the flesh of his faithful warriors being eaten by their assassins. His wife and twelve-year-old daughter were near him, and he knew that his death and theirs would be more cruel. He made a sign to his wife to kill the child, so that she might be saved from a worse fate. The mother thereupon strangled her daughter with her own hands, but she herself and Maranui, the chief, were killed with red-hot irons.

Stewart did not succeed in hushing up this foul crime, in which he had played such a guilty part. It leaked out in the Bay of Islands, and shocked even men who were far from being gentle and refined. The story came to the ears of Governor Darling in Australia, who had long considered it necessary to put a check upon the violence and lawlessness of the New Zealand traders. Stewart was arrested and placed on his trial for murder at Sydney, but unfortunately sufficient evidence was not forthcoming, and the gallows was cheated of a man who richly deserved hanging. Governor Darling, however, carried through an Act for the prevention of the horrid traffic in dead men's heads, which had been the cause of many abominable deeds.

The great ambition of the Maori tribes was to obtain supplies of fire-arms, which would give them an immense superiority over their tribal enemies; and as they were willing to barter almost anything they possessed for the sake of old muskets and shot, it was a constant temptation to traders, who had no delicate scruples in this respect. Consequently the horrors of native warfare were redoubled, for a tribe armed only with the old-fashioned *mērē* became the easy victims of warriors who had been able to get the more deadly weapons.

A famous warrior named Hongi, with another chief named Waikato, visited England in 1820 under the guidance of a missionary, and became more than a nine days' wonder in London. He visited the Tower of London, and was deeply impressed by the armour and weapons he saw there. He was presented with a suit of armour by the King, and upon returning to his native land wore it in battle until his death. But

although he had been looked upon as a humane and well-meaning chief by the London missionary societies, he went back with the firm resolution of obtaining the wonderful weapons of the English, and using them for a war of conquest in New Zealand. In Sydney he succeeded in buying a large number of fire-arms, with which he armed his tribe, and then proceeded to attack other great tribes on the boundaries of his dominions. Against the stone and wooden weapons of his adversaries his English muskets proved irresistible. A thousand warriors of the Ngatimaru were slain in one night, 1,500 of the Waikato were slaughtered in another great battle, and the dreadful Hongi stalked through the land like an evil demon, feasting his warriors on the flesh of their enemies, until at last he fell in battle. This was only a part of the evil, for Rauparaha, the murderer of Maranui on the brig *Elizabeth*, had also followed the example of Hongi and armed his tribe with modern weapons, emulating his exploits, while two other chiefs, named Te Whero Whero and Te Waharao, took up the bloody work of massacre and tribal war.

After the Bay of Islands became the haunt of whalers and traders—sometimes 1,000 of them were gathered together in that neighbourhood, too often disgracing their race by licentiousness and debauchery—it became the custom for each tribe to be accompanied by a white man whom they called a Pakeha Maori, or foreign Maori. In many cases sailors would desert their ships to lead an idle life with the natives, marrying Maori wives, and degenerating into a savage state, in which they were often far more brutal than the natives themselves. But in some cases, such as when the crew of a ship named the *Rutherford* were kidnapped and tattooed, white men were captured and attached to the tribes as prisoners of war. They were supposed to give *mana* to the tribe possessing them, and often enough were valuable as fighting men and captains in native warfare.

CHAPTER L

THE BIBLE AND THE MAORIS

BUT while British sailors and traders were guilty of much ruffianly conduct, of which the *Boyd* and *Elizabeth* incidents were notorious examples, the honour of our race was redeemed in New Zealand by adventurers of a nobler stamp. These were the missionaries, who, with the utmost courage and shining faith, went alone and unarmed into the midst of cannibal tribes, preaching the Gospel of Christ, and teaching the better way to tribes engaged in relentless warfare.

The apostle of Christianity among the Maoris was Samuel Marsden, whose name is still revered by their descendants. Marsden's heart was first drawn to the Maori people by the sufferings of a native chief named Ruatura, who had been cruelly treated in London, to which he had made his way in the vain hope of seeing King George, the Great Chief of the Pakehas, and who on his return in a convict-ship to Australia had been flogged like a felon.

Ruatura had no reason to love the white men or to put faith in white men's religion, but his heart had been touched by the kindness of Marsden, who was on the same ship, and invited him to his home in Sydney. Here in the company of the missionary, treated with respect and listened to with sympathy, the Maori chief learnt to know the nobler and brighter side of Pakeha character. When Marsden sent him to New Zealand, and restored him to his friends, he was grateful to his good friend, and promised to do any service that might be asked him by his protector. The time came when Samuel Marsden asked him to fulfil that promise. He prevailed upon the London Missionary Society to appoint him and a number of other missionaries for service in New Zealand, and to equip a coasting-ship in which they might trade in a business-like way with the natives, in order to get

an introduction to them for the purpose of teaching the Christian religion. A vessel named the *Active* was commissioned for this object, and upon its first voyage from Sydney to New Zealand it carried presents to Ruatara, and invited him to return on a visit to Marsden and Sydney, taking with him a number of chiefs.

Ruatara was highly pleased at the prospect of seeing his old friend, and among other chiefs who accompanied him on the *Active* was his uncle Hongi, the great warrior. That, however, was before the days when Hongi had armed his tribe with English weapons. Marsden was stirred to great enthusiasm by the demeanour of his guests.

‘They are as noble a race of men,’ he wrote, ‘as may be met with in any part of the world. I trust I shall be able in some measure to put a stop to those dreadful murders which have been committed upon the island for some years past, both by the Europeans and natives.’

A month later Samuel Marsden, with three other missionaries, named Kendall, Hall, and King, returned with Hongi to the territories of the Ngapuhi tribe, who received the guests of their great chief with hospitality.

At the end of a few days Marsden, with another missionary, boldly approached the land of the Whangaroans, who were the deadly enemies of the tribe over which Hongi ruled. One of them spoke English, having sailed in an English ship, and to him Marsden explained the object of his mission, asking him to proclaim it to his followers. The message was received in silence, and Marsden was a little nervous lest he had been guilty of too much rashness in passing so soon between two hostile tribes. As the guest of Hongi, he must have been suspected by Ti-pa-he, the rival chief. That night he was directed to a place in the camp while the tribe retired to rest.

‘The night was clear, the stars shone bright, and the sea in our front was smooth. Around us were innumerable spears stuck upright in the ground, and groups of natives lying in all

directions, like a flock of sheep upon the grass, as there were neither tents nor huts to cover them. I viewed our present situation with sensations and feelings that I cannot express, surrounded by cannibals who had massacred and devoured our countrymen. I wondered much at the mysteries of Providence, and how these things could be. Never did I behold the blessed advantages of civilization in a more grateful light than now.'

That visit, dangerous as it seemed, was the first missionary triumph in New Zealand, for Marsden and his friend persuaded the two hostile tribes to abandon their war, and a few days later, at a conference on board the *Active*, the rival chiefs rubbed noses as a sign of reconciliation. Then, later on, a dramatic scene took place on the seashore, when the first Christian service was celebrated in the presence of both tribes. It was Christmas Day, and Marsden preached from the text, 'Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy,' after singing the Old Hundredth Psalm, and 'feeling his very soul melt within him.' The natives told Ruatura that they could not understand what he meant.

'He replied that they were not to mind that now, for they would understand by-and-by, and that he would explain my meaning as far as he could. When I had done preaching he informed them what I had been talking about. In this manner the Gospel has been introduced into New Zealand, and I fervently pray that the glory of it may never depart from its inhabitants till time shall be no more.'

Samuel Marsden and his fellow-missionaries were not unsuccessful in their labours. Many tribes not only adopted Christianity, but showed their realization of its principles by making peace with tribes against whom they had long waged warfare. Then for a time hopes were dashed to the ground by the treachery and blood-thirsty actions of Hongi, who disobeyed their prohibition of fire-arms, and, as we have seen, engaged in a warfare more ruthless than any that had ever been witnessed in New Zealand. But the cessation of this

war was in no small measure due to missionary zeal, and in later years, when the enmity of the tribes was aroused, not against each other, but against the white men, who claimed their land, it was the missionaries, again, who worked for peace, and secured the neutrality or friendship of many tribes who otherwise would have gone upon the war-path.

Now that the Maoris are vastly outnumbered by the British settlers, and when great populous cities of white men and women and great tracts of country, dotted with prosperous farms and homesteads of British people, make New Zealand one of the valuable colonies of the Empire, it is difficult to realize how short a time ago it is since colonists were in a dangerous minority, and surrounded by great and warlike tribes. In those days, not further back than the middle of the nineteenth century, the union of tribes in a national war against the Pakeha might have caused the massacre of every white man and woman in the two islands. That was not a visionary danger, the horror of a bad dream. There was a time when the dearest traditions of the Maori people were outraged by what they considered to be the treachery and greed of the foreigner, and when their former feelings of friendliness and their loyalty to the British Government were strained to breaking-point. That only a few tribes took up arms against us, and, abandoning the God of the Pakeha, returned to their old gods of war, was due to the teaching, the sympathy, and the heroic endeavour of missionaries like Marsden, Williams, and Bishop Selwyn. No doubt some of these men made mistakes, and perhaps gave justice only on the Maori side; but New Zealanders should never forget the debt they owed in the old days to the men of peace.

CHAPTER LI

THE LAND OF THEIR FATHERS

A NEW era in New Zealand history was opened by the formation of a company in London under the title of the New Zealand Association, which had for its object the purchase of land in the two islands for colonizing purposes. It originated from the fertile brain of Gibbon Wakefield, who had experimented with colonial problems in Australia and Canada. Lord Durham and many distinguished men were on the committee, and Gibbon Wakefield's two brothers, Colonel E. J. and Arthur Wakefield, were active members. The British Government were not very favourably inclined to grant a charter.

Lord John Russell, the Prime Minister, and his colleagues had already heard of conflicts between native tribes and white men who had made purchases, or pretended purchases, of land, which were afterwards repudiated by the Maori chiefs. They had a feeling of honour towards the rightful owners of a land which was already acknowledged to be a British possession, though not a British colony in the usual meaning of the term, and they were exceedingly anxious at that time to safeguard the reputation of this country against such accusations as had been levelled, not always unjustly, against our treatment of native races. On the other hand, there had lately been attempts on the part of France, ending in failure, but still the cause of uneasiness, to establish possessions on the New Zealand coast, and public opinion was sufficiently strong to insist that if those islands were to be colonized at all it should be under the British flag. The New Zealand Association was also willing to pledge itself to the agreement that no land whatever should be alienated or purchased from the Maori people except by full consent of the chiefs as well as of the Crown. After a good deal of trouble and discussion, therefore, the Association was launched, and the brothers Wakefield set

off to the promised land in a vessel named the *Tory* with a full cargo of muskets, powder and shot, hatchets, pipes, Jew's-harps, and other articles likely to please the simple souls of the savages.

The old warrior Rauparaha, who had devoured the flesh of his enemies on Stewart's ill-famed brig, and who now united two powerful tribes under his sway, was the first chief to be approached by the persuasive offers of the New Zealand Association. Naturally his desires were inflamed by the sight of such fascinating wares as were exhibited on the deck of the *Tory*, and there is no doubt he agreed to part with some of the land within the dominion of his tribes. How much or how little was really included in the bargain from his point of view is extremely doubtful, but there is no doubt whatever that he had neither the intention nor the right of ceding the vast territories which Colonel Wakefield claimed in return for his muskets and ball-cartridges.

These territories extended over several degrees of latitude, and if really handed over to the New Zealand Association, would have dispossessed no less than eleven tribes from their hereditary possessions, only two of those tribes being under the rule of the chief who was supposed to have made the bargain. As a matter of fact, Rauparaha himself was soon astounded, or pretended to be astounded, at Colonel Wakefield's claims to more than a small and insignificant area of his own tribal territory, and repudiated the very idea, answering in scornful silence the furious denunciations of the English officer, who called him a liar and a traitor. Before many weeks had passed a native war broke out between two tribes owing to pretended sales of land to the English company by natives unauthorized to part with a square foot of soil, either of their own or any other tribe, and it was only by the influence of the missionary Williams that peace was restored when nearly 100 warriors had fallen on either side. Meanwhile the inauguration of the New Zealand Company, and the prospect of selling 'plots' at good prices to intending settlers, brought out a swarm of

unprincipled and unchartered 'land-grabbers,' who also hoped to acquire much territory in return for cheap guns and large stocks of the melodious Jew's-harp, and, like Colonel Wakefield, claimed to have purchased great stretches of country from tribes who, as we found to our cost, were ready to fight to the last gasp in defence of this very land.

Missionaries like Williams, who were the best friends of the natives, knowing their passionate attachment to the land of their fathers, and believing in their future as a noble race of Christian people, were quickly determined to protest in the strongest terms against this wholesale land-grabbing by false bargains. They pointed out to the British Government that the New Zealand Association was not adhering to its pledge to obtain the consent of all the responsible chiefs before purchasing territory, nor to its formal undertaking to submit their claims to the consideration of the Crown. They also forwarded emphatic warnings that this action on the part of the chartered company, and still more of the irresponsible 'land sharks,' would inevitably lead to disastrous native warfare, to the great danger of the British colonists who were now arriving in New Zealand, and to the undoing of the missionary labours for the conversion of the Maoris to Christianity.

These representations had a great effect upon the Government, and after many debates in Parliament and Councils of Ministers, it was decided to send out a Lieutenant-Governor to New Zealand for the purpose of formally proclaiming the country as a Crown colony, and protecting the Maori people in their undoubted rights to the land. The man selected for the duty was Captain Hobson, an able officer of the Royal Navy, of strong and resolute character, likely to be successful in his dealings with this great and difficult problem. As Lieutenant-Governor he was to act under, and with the advice of, Sir George Gipps, the Governor of New South Wales, who at that time also included New Zealand within his jurisdiction. His instructions were to invite all the Maori tribes to give their allegiance to Queen Victoria, in recognition of which the

rights and interests of the natives would be safeguarded as British subjects, and a commission would be appointed to inquire into all reputed purchases of land, and to decide upon such claims according to the Maori land laws. It was to be strictly laid down that the Queen would not acknowledge as valid any title to land which was not either derived from or confirmed by a grant to be made in Her Majesty's name, or on her behalf.

It was on January 14, 1840, that Captain Hobson crossed over from Sydney to New Zealand, and, after issuing various proclamations, according to the terms of his instructions just given, he summoned the chiefs of all the tribes to meet him at Waitangi, on the north shore of the Bay of Islands, for the purpose of consenting to a treaty with the Queen of Great Britain. This historic meeting, at which was to be signed the great charter of the Maori race, took place on February 4, 1840, and was attended by a large number of chiefs, by Henry Williams, the missionary and interpreter, by Captain Hobson and his officials, and by a number of Europeans. The scene was a dramatic one, and very picturesque. Round the Lieutenant-Governor, on a wooden platform that had been raised in a central space, encircled with white tents and decorated with flags, sat the Maori chiefs, grave and motionless as statues, but keenly watching the proceedings, and deeply excited by the importance of the occasion. Among them moved the veteran missionary, Henry Williams, with copies of the treaty in the Maori language, which he explained to them point by point. Captain Hobson then made a speech, in which, as impressively as he could, he assured the natives that they might give their absolute confidence to the good faith of the Queen's government, and pleaded with them, for their own sake, to give their assent to the treaty which was about to be read.

Never before in the history of the Empire had such generous terms been voluntarily accorded by the British race to the native people of a land on which the flag had been planted, and the Treaty of Waitangi gave a charter of rights which had

not been forced from the dominant race by bloodshed and strife, but drawn up according to the noblest ideals of peace and justice. By that treaty the British Government, in the name and by the authority of Queen Victoria, addressing the native chiefs and tribes of New Zealand, and 'anxious to protect their just rights and properties, and to secure to them the enjoyment of peace and good order,' invited them to cede to the Queen all their rights to the sovereignty over their respective territories. In consideration of this, 'Her Majesty the Queen of England extends to the natives of New Zealand her Royal protection, and imparts to them all the rights and privileges of British subjects.' By this treaty, also, all the land of the two islands was guaranteed to the tribes 'so long as it is their wish and desire to retain the same in their possession'; but the British Government claimed the first right of purchasing any land which the true proprietors might be willing to sell, at prices agreed upon between the owners and responsible agents of the Queen.

After the treaty had been read, the chiefs were invited to speak, and nearly thirty of them rose one after the other and addressed the Lieutenant-Governor with dignified and impressive oratory. Most of them seemed favourably disposed towards the offer of the Crown, but five, at least, fiercely opposed its acceptance, and it was evident that their national pride was aroused, and that they were suspicious of the Government's good faith. One of them, in a state of intense excitement, stretched out his arm towards Hobson with a shout of 'Send the man away!' Then, turning to the assembled chiefs, he cried: 'Do not sign the paper! If you do you will be reduced to slavery, and be compelled to break stones on the roadsides. The land of your fathers will be seized by the Pakeha, and your *mana* as chiefs will be gone for ever!'

This address stirred the chiefs to great emotion. Captain Hobson began to fear a general refusal of the treaty, but at this critical hour Waka Nene, chief of the Ngapuhi, one of the most powerful tribes then in New Zealand, rose up in his place, and,

with glowing eyes, there poured from his lips a stream of words which amazed his listeners by their wonderful eloquence and stirring effect. He spoke in favour of the English offer, and appealed to his countrymen to place faith in the great Queen. He saw no reason, he said, why the foreigner and the Maori should not dwell together in peace, nor why certain lands should not be sold to them at just and reasonable prices. The treaty was a good one. The shadow passed to the Queen, the substance remained with the Maori. Then he turned to Captain Hobson, stretching his arm towards him as his opponent had done. 'Keep faith with us,' he said. 'You must be our father. You must not allow us to become slaves. You must preserve our customs, and never allow our lands to be wrested from us.'

This long and eloquent speech turned the scale in favour of the treaty. If Waka Nene, the great warrior of the Ngapuhi, saw nothing but good in it, the chiefs of less powerful tribes need not nourish suspicion and fear. All the chiefs present thereupon signed the treaty with a copy of their tattoo-marks or with a cross; only Waka Nene, the friend of the missionaries, was able to write his name.

Such, then, was the Magna Charta of the Maoris by which the British Government pledged itself to guarantee the rights of the natives to their land for ever except by just purchase, with their own full consent. Only one chief refused to accept it. This was an old warrior named Te Whero Whero, a stubborn and irreconcilable patriot, who would not yield his sovereignty or barter one acre of ground, whatever might be the value of the Pakeha's promises.

CHAPTER LII

RIVAL CLAIMS

To the New Zealand Association and to other companies and individuals who had made claims of having purchased large territories for colonizing purposes the treaty was the cause of

intense annoyance and anxiety. They found that they had not only to deal with the natives, but with the British Government, as represented by Captain Hobson, who was determined to exercise his full authority to make a rigid investigation of all claims according to the Maori land laws. As it turned out, Captain Hobson and his lieutenant, Shortland, with Sir William Martin as Chief Justice, and Sir William Swainson as Attorney-General, were not at all inclined to recognise the validity of any of these claims, and cut down the territories which the New Zealand Association believed they had legally acquired to 110,000 acres around Port Nicholson. It was a very serious thing, for thousands of colonists had been coming out from England to found new homes on land purchased from the Association, and they now found themselves cooped up in a narrow strip which allowed of no free development and expansion. The natives, prompted by the missionaries, were not slow to repudiate the rights of other settlers at Taranaki, Wangvanui, and elsewhere, and Captain Hobson found himself confronted by intricate, thorny problems of Maori land laws which had to be unravelled in the courts during long months of investigation, and by the tedious examination of native witnesses.

Colonel Wakefield, on the other hand, keen, audacious, and enterprising, with an immense responsibility on his hands as the agent of the New Zealand Association, and sincerely anxious to colonize the country and to develop its immense resources, which were at present lying idle, was continually coming into conflict with the representatives of the Crown on the one side, and the tribes on the other. Popular sympathy outside New Zealand itself is apt to incline towards the Maori traditions of their inalienable right to the land of their fathers, and it must be admitted that Colonel Wakefield occasionally transgressed the Treaty of Waitangi in a way that brings him under reproach. But he saw before him on every side great territories, for the most part uninhabited, magnificently adapted for agricultural and pastoral purposes,

and belonging only by some vague and shadowy claims to a savage tribe dwelling perhaps in another territory, hundreds of miles away. Perhaps in the past they had conquered it from some other tribe by ruthless massacre, but they had never tilled its soil, or made their homes by its lakes and forests. Were the eager and enterprising farmers who were coming over in increasing numbers, and who had already founded the city of Wellington, to be kept within narrow boundaries while all this good earth lay unoccupied?

Captain Hobson himself was doing very little in the way of purchasing land, even according to the letter of his famous treaty. He had certainly obtained a fine site for the foundations of a city at Auckland, to which other colonists were now coming, but the Government allowed him only a beggarly sum for acquiring new ground from the natives, and he seemed determined to thwart (so it seemed to the New Zealand Association) all Wakefield's own efforts in this direction. It may easily be imagined that there were very strained relations between Colonel Wakefield and Governor Hobson.*

Poor Hobson was stricken down by partial paralysis at an early stage of his office, but held on manfully to his duties, and was not less resolute because an invalid. Troubles crowded upon him as well as upon his political opponent. At times it seemed as if a native war were inevitable. Rauparaha, the old fighting chief, considered the rights of his tribe were outraged by some claims of Colonel Wakefield, and boldly threatened to fight the English.

In an address to his tribe, and in the hearing of Mr. E. J. Wakefield, he swore that if all his warriors deserted their territory at the bidding of the Pakeha he would stay in defence of his land.

'Go, all of you!' he cried with violence to the assembled tribe. 'Take your children on your backs. Go, and leave my

* It should be said here that in 1840 the latter was promoted to be Governor instead of Lieutenant-Governor, New Zealand being made independent of New South Wales.

land without men. When you are gone I will stay and fight the soldiers with my own hands. I ask you not to stop. Rauparaha does not fear. By fighting I have got my name. Since I conquered these lands I have ever been spoken of as a King. I have lived and will die a King with my *mērē* in my hand. Go! I am no beggar. Rauparaha will fight the Queen's soldiers with his own hand.'

Naturally his warriors, worked into a passion of enthusiasm by this fiery eloquence, were not at all inclined to 'go' and to leave their chief single-handed. They stayed on their territory, prepared to defend it against the land-grabbing Pakeha.

Another great chief, Te Hen Hew, who, like all the Maoris at this time, were hospitable and friendly to travellers who came without designs upon his dominions, told one of them that 'we will welcome you as visitors, but we will not part with the land sacred to the ashes of our fathers.'

Te Whero Whero, the irreconcilable, swore that he would sweep the English into the sea if they dared set an aggressive foot upon his soil.

Rangihaeta, another chief, showed his determination to resist foreign encroachments by repeatedly pulling down the surveyors' huts and fences, put up on his land by agents of the New Zealand Company, and threatening more violent action if the attempts continued.

In the turmoil of disputes that raged not only between the white men and the natives, but also between tribe and tribe, owing to the bickering and bartering for land, war would indeed have raged from one end of the island to the other but for the restraining influence of the missionaries and the strict manner in which Captain Hobson held to the Treaty of Waitangi. As a Governor he was much hated by men who believed him to be the enemy of colonization, but the Maoris themselves justly regarded him as a true man and a good friend, and they grieved sincerely when he died on September 10, 1842. A letter addressed to 'Mother Victoria' by a

Maori chief is the best testimony to his qualities. Pleading for a worthy successor, the writer said :

‘Look out for a good man—a man of judgment. Let not a troubler come here. Let not a boy come here, or one puffed up. Let him be a good man, as the Governor who has just died.’

While a successor was being appointed, an official named Shortland, who had been Hobson’s trusty lieutenant, and to whom Hobson had bequeathed his principles of Government, administered the affairs of New Zealand with the assistance of two important advisers who now came upon the scene. One of these was a Government official named Spain, sent out with the high-sounding title of Protector of the Aborigines, and whose professional prejudices in favour of every Maori claim and protest earned him the bitter hostility of many colonists. The other was a man of a different stamp, who won the whole-hearted admiration and reverence of every New Zealander, be he aborigine or emigrant. This was Bishop Selwyn, a type of ‘muscular’ Christian beloved of Charles Kingsley, who was a disciple of the same school, and a broad-minded, gallant-hearted, humane and generous man, of indomitable courage and perfect faith. To Bishop Selwyn New Zealand owes an undying debt of gratitude. Though he was earnest in his endeavours to Christianize the Maori and to safeguard his rights and liberties, though he strove always for peace, and on many occasions was the one man who held back the tribes from war, he was also a friend and ally of the colonial, seeing the problems of the country from the colonist’s as well as from the Maori’s standpoint, and working valiantly in the service of the Empire.

It was not long before his counsels were needed in a matter of most serious and dangerous import. Captain Wakefield, one of the brothers of Colonel Wakefield, went down to a district called the Wairau with a magistrate’s warrant to arrest Rangihaeta for having pulled down the surveyor’s huts on his territory. Rangihaeta, however, was not only the subordinate chief, but the son-in-law of the fierce old Maori King, Rauparaha, and Wakefield had to deal with the latter

as well as with the alleged criminal. With Wakefield was a magistrate named Thompson, and some companions. They came upon the two chiefs encamped with their tribe on the banks of a stream. Thompson, advancing, refused to accept the hand which Rauparaha proffered, and declared that he had come to arrest him with the other chief. He produced a pair of handcuffs, but the Maori put his hands under his cloak and, in a dignified manner, refused to be manacled like a felon, declaring his intention to stay where he was. Thompson then ordered his men to fix bayonets and arrest the chiefs. A scuffle took place, and two shots were fired from the English side. One of them killed a Maori warrior, the other the wife of Rangihaeta, who was also the daughter of Rauparaha. In a moment the Maoris hurled themselves upon the Englishmen. By Maori law they must have blood for blood. The Europeans fled for their lives and raised a white handkerchief in token of surrender. But Rangihaeta sprang to the side of the old chief. 'They have killed your daughter,' he cried. 'They must die.'

In the fight that followed only one man escaped from the slaughter to tell the tale before the magistrates at Wellington. Nineteen Englishmen were killed, including poor Captain Wakefield, a gallant young officer of excellent and winning character, and Thompson, the magistrate. The bodies were slashed with tomahawks, according to Maori usage, but Rauparaha restrained his men from cannibalism.

This tragedy caused immense excitement among the Maori tribes, as well as among the colonists. The former were indignant that a chief should have been threatened with the treatment of a common criminal, and exultant that he should have spilt the blood of the insulting Pakehas. The colonists themselves were alarmed and wrathful, fiercely demanding that the Government should send a strong punitive expedition against Rauparaha and his tribe, to take blood for blood and strike terror into the hearts of the natives. It was at this time that Captain Hobson's successor arrived in New Zealand.

The new Governor was Captain Robert Fitzroy, R.N., a well-meaning and honourable gentleman, courageous and determined, but by no means competent to deal with the great difficulties confronting him on every side. His very first act, the settlement of the Wairau affair, as the affray with Captain Wakefield's force was called, made him hated by large numbers of the colonists, over whom he was appointed to rule. Having received the reports of Spain, the 'Protector of the Aborigines,' and of Bishop Selwyn and other missionaries, he went down to the Wellington district and held a conference with Rauparaha. The old chief spoke long and eloquently in defence of his action, and during his oration Captain Fitzroy sat scribbling notes on a sheet of paper. Then he rose and said that he thought the Englishmen had been to blame, that they had been the aggressors, that they had not been justified in firing upon the natives, that the New Zealand Company had no claim to the land, and that in consequence no punishment would be exacted from the chief or tribe. This decision was received with great satisfaction by the Maoris throughout New Zealand, but called forth a torrent of abuse upon the Governor's head from people who thought he had betrayed his race and destroyed the prestige of the British Government. The last assertion was not wholly unjustified. The tribes in the Wellington district became puffed up with pride and audacious against the colonists in their neighbourhood, breaking out into spasmodic warfare, which for many years was a cause of great trouble and danger to the colonists.

Captain Fitzroy's next achievement did not increase his popularity with his own countrymen. There was a great dispute raging as to the native rights over the Taranaki district, which had been bought and colonized under the administration of Colonel Wakefield. The original inhabitants of this territory had been enslaved and carried away by the Waikato tribe, leaving the land deserted at the time of its purchase by the New Zealand Company. But by the influence of the missionaries the Waikato chiefs had been

induced to liberate the captured people of Taranaki, who at once claimed their ancient land. Captain Fitzroy, called upon to adjudicate, decided against the Company in favour of the tribesmen, and cut down the boundaries of the district purchased by Colonel Wakefield to the size of a few small farms.

Naturally the colonists, who were penned into this narrow district, and who saw the wretched survivors of the Taranaki tribes roaming over an immense area, which they put to no practical use, were filled with a burning sense of ill-feeling against what they considered to be the rank injustice of the Governor.

Poor Governor Fitzroy was trying in a blundering way to do his best for both natives and colonists, but he only succeeded in obtaining the contempt of the former and the dislike of the latter, while burning his own fingers. He abolished the Customs duties for a time, hoping to check a falling off in the number of whaling and other ships putting into the Bay of Islands and elsewhere. But as his revenue had depended largely on the Customs, he had to clap them on again in a hurry. Next he decided to abolish the Government monopoly of land purchase from the Maoris and to charge a tax of ten shillings an acre on all ground bought by private individuals. In the first place this was a direct infringement of the Treaty of Waitangi—the Maori Magna Charta—and as such angered the missionaries, and through them many of the chiefs, who did not wish to barter their land. But, secondly, the high tax displeased the very people who had pressed him into this action, so that, distressed by their loud complaints, he reduced the tax to the purely nominal fee of one penny per acre. Now, however, his treasury sank so low that he adopted, without the sanction of the British Government, an issue of paper-money, purely fictitious in value, as it represented no true wealth, either in hand or in prospective.

By this time news of all these blunders began to alarm the British Government, and to add to Captain Fitzroy's disgrace, a serious native war now broke out. For some time the

least peaceable of the Maoris and those unrestrained by the Christianizing influences of the missionaries, had been assuming a tone of insolence towards the Governor, which he had not been quick to detect. They had invited him to a barbaric banquet at Auckland, at which they had indulged in a tremendous war-dance with the deliberate intention of displaying their power and ferocity.

‘With muskets glittering in the sun, their tomahawks and clubs waving in the air, they stamped their wild war-dance, and then, alternately, rushed thundering down the slope. Halting as one man in front of their opponents, each party again defied the other in dance, and shouts, and yells. Then one body, the strangers, fled up the hill, halted, danced, rushed down again at their utmost speed, and again halted, like soldiers at a review, at the word of their chief, within pistol-shot of the adverse party, who were crouched to receive them with spears, the front rank kneeling, the mass behind, about forty deep, having muskets and other weapons in readiness. Each body consisted of about 800 men, in a compact mass, twenty in front and forty deep, their movements absolutely simultaneous, like well-drilled soldiers.’

The sight of this savage display affected the nerves of Robert Fitzroy, brave sailor as he was, and he realized, perhaps for the first time, what a formidable enemy the Maoris would be if ever they became united against a common foe.

CHAPTER LIII

THE FIRST WAR

THE demonstration of the war-dance was a harmless affair compared to the audacity of a chief named Hone Heke, who showed his contempt for the white men and their Governor by marching one day into the town of Kororareka, in the year 1845, plundering some houses of English colonists, and cutting

down the flag-staff on a neighbouring hill, over which waved the symbol of British sovereignty. Such a flagrant act of insolence could not be overlooked even by Fitzroy, lenient as he was. He had only an insignificant force of troops under his command, but with these he hurried to Kororareka. Fortunately the tribe of the Ngapuhi was divided against itself, and a Christianized chief named Waka Nene took the part of the English against Hone Heke. The bad behaviour of that gentleman was lightly punished by the forfeit of a few muskets, afterwards returned to him as a present. Punishment of that kind is really pleasant. It encourages man's natural desire to be naughty, so often as he can escape a whipping.

Chief Heke thought it a great game, and not long afterwards cut down the flag-staff again. This time Fitzroy offered £100 reward for the capture of the offender, as if he were a highwayman on a North-Country moor. Heke retaliated by offering a very much smaller sum—the value at which he appraised a British Governor—for the capture of Fitzroy. Once more the staff was erected, and the British flag ‘floated proudly in the breeze.’ Once more Heke cut it down, and this time sacked the town of Kororareka with about 700 warriors, plundering and burning the houses. The attack was repulsed for some time by the officers and seamen of a British vessel called the *Hazard*, which had been stationed in the bay, and they, with the aid of 100 armed civilians, defended a small fort on which his famous flag-staff was raised. But against such overwhelming numbers prolonged resistance was impossible, and when Captain Robertson of the *Hazard* had been dangerously wounded, with twenty of his men, and when the death-roll numbered fifteen, Lieutenant Phillpotts, as second in command, very gallantly conducted a retreat to the boats. The Maoris behaved chivalrously in spite of this unwarranted outrage. They released a party of prisoners without hurting a hair of their heads, and restored to their friends, under the protection of a white flag, the wife and

child of the flag-staff signalman, who had been killed when working one of the guns.

Nevertheless, it was absolutely necessary to exact severe punishment for an act of war which had struck a severe blow at the safety and prestige of the Europeans in New Zealand. The islands were practically destitute of military defence, and there was no knowing what might happen if other tribes joined the rebellion. Troops were hurried across from Sydney, while the missionaries were endeavouring to calm the excitement of the friendly tribes. Unfortunately only a few small guns were sent with the reinforcements, and Colonel Despard, the commanding officer, was inexperienced in Maori tactics. Hone Heke, the rebel who had been joined by a tribe under a chief named Kawiti, fell back upon a stronghold named the Okaihau Pah. This 'pah,' or native fort, situated in the heart of a forest, was formed of a double row of strong palisades and a deep ditch in which many of the enemy lay concealed. Waka Nene, our faithful ally, strongly advised Colonel Despard not to attempt an assault upon such a strong position, but to sit down quietly and wait until the two chiefs were forced to surrender owing to lack of food and water.

But Despard wanted a little glory, and he was not the man to play a waiting game for long. Perhaps, also, he had been touched by the spirit of his opponents, as revealed by an extraordinary act of chivalry. A convoy of food, surrounded by a band of Heke's warriors, had been untouched on the score that the enemy would not be able to fight if he had no food, and the Maori desire was to fight him, not to starve him. It should be mentioned here that these chivalrous scruples were repeatedly shown in Maori warfare, and there were occasions when the Maoris actually supplied their enemy with food for the same reason.

For some days the 'pah' was bombarded by the foolish little pop-guns which went by the name of artillery, and completely failed to effect a breach. Then, contrary to advice, Colonel Despard ordered a general assault. With desperate

courage our own troops and our native allies hurled themselves at the stockades, trying to batter them down. Only a few got through, among them being brave Lieutenant Phillpotts, who were immediately despatched with the *māris* of the enemy. Meanwhile from the ditches in between the palisades a deadly fire swept upon the assailants, doing very heavy damage. Thirty-four, including three officers, were killed, and sixty-six wounded, before the bugle sounded the 'Retreat.' This amounted to half the attacking force, and one wonders whether to be more astonished at the tenacity of the men, who held on to the stockade in furious and futile efforts to break through, or at the good shooting of the hostile Maoris, armed with what were probably old-fashioned muskets.

Colonel Despard must have had some very bitter and humiliating thoughts as the remnants of his force straggled back, and two days later accepted the enemy's offer of a truce to bury their dead. Perhaps his most agonizing thought was the hopelessness of retrieving his reputation and wiping out the stain of a deplorable defeat—for his ammunition was all but spent. For some days the siege was resumed in a languid and ineffectual way, and then—not, perhaps, without a sense of relief—it was discovered that the enemy had stolen away in the dead of night.

The news of this disaster was the last nail in the coffin of Robert Fitzroy's governorship. Not his was the failure of the siege, but his administration had been marked by such a succession of blows to the prestige of the colony that the British Government felt obliged to recall him. Their choice of a successor was a happy one for New Zealand. Captain George Grey, whom we met as an explorer in West Australia, had already gained an excellent reputation in that part of the world, and Lord John Russell, the English Prime Minister, very wisely selected him as the most promising man to deal with the difficult and dangerous situation in New Zealand. Before the new Governor arrived, poor Fitzroy, utterly unnerved by the defeat at Okaihau Pah, offered terms of

peace to the victorious Heke. This Maori chief, elated by his success, was now the hero of his race, and he was not inclined to forfeit his honour. His answer to the Governor was such as to still further raise him in the estimation of the tribes.

'You are a stranger,' he wrote, 'and we are strangers. We do not understand your thoughts, and you do not understand our thoughts. God has made this country for us; it cannot be sliced. If it were a whale it might be sliced. But as for this, do you return to your own country, to England, which was made by God for you. God has made this land for us, and not for any stranger or foreign nation to lay hand on this sacred country.' Then he quoted the refrain of a Maori war-song. 'Oh! let us fight, fight, fight, aha! Let us fight, aha! for the land which lies open before us!'

When Captain Grey arrived in New Zealand to take up his governorship, the situation was really alarming. Rauparaha, the old warrior of the Cook Strait territory, was breathing fire and slaughter against the hated Pakeha of the Company's settlements, and colonists were crowding from all parts into Auckland, where panic had taken possession of the city. Meanwhile Hone Heke's ally, Kawiti, was strongly entrenched at Ruapekapeka Pah, and Heke himself was in another 'pah,' about twenty miles away. Grey grappled with the situation promptly, and sent a friendly tribe to get between the two hostile chiefs and prevent their joining forces. The Government was more generous to him than to his predecessor in regard to military expenditure, and he was therefore enabled to bring over heavy guns and larger reinforcements from Australia.

Colonel Despard, in spite of his previous defeat, was retained in command, and under Grey's instructions he proceeded to attack the Ruapekapeka Pah, where he redeemed his reputation by its capture. It must be admitted, however, that this success was due rather to the carelessness, or what some may consider the religious sincerity, of the enemy than to the sagacity and dash of the besieging force.

Having learnt caution, Despard did not attempt an infantry assault until he had battered down the formidable defences. The bombardment went on for several days, and continued over the Sunday in that week. Curiously enough, the Christian Maoris were greater 'Sabbatarians' than the Christian white soldiers, and retired to an outwork of the stockade, beyond reach of our fire, to hold a religious service.

Waka Nene's warriors, who were still fighting on our side, were quicker to interpret the silence of the enemy's position than our own troops, and, creeping up, found the chief part of the stockade deserted and defenceless. Bringing the news to Colonel Despard, an advance was promptly made, with the result of capturing the pah before the hostile but hymn-singing Maoris had recovered from their surprise at this 'desecration of the Sabbath.' When they were aware of what had happened, they rushed time and time again, with desperate valour, to retake their own blockade; but the positions were now reversed, and the besiegers were now the besieged, with all the advantage on their side.

Finally, a sally was made by the British soldiers and sailors, who drove them from the wood into which they had been compelled to take refuge from the severity of our fire. Even now, however, their courage was not broken, and though they had to retreat, it was in good order, and they were able to carry away their wounded. This blow seemed to shatter their pride completely, and it was not long before both Kawiti and Heke were eager for terms. 'Friend Governor,' wrote the former, 'let peace be made between you and me.' Peace was made, and, better still, maintained with the tribes ruled by those two chiefs, and it is a pleasure to know that a descendant or namesake of Hone Heke became a member of the New Zealand Parliament.

Grey—who became Sir George Grey after this success—next turned his attention to the turbulent old warrior Rau-paraha, who was still giving trouble in the territory around Cook Strait, his warriors indulging not so much in warfare

as in murders, ambushes, raids, and plundering, assisted by another tribe, under the chief Rangihaeta. Grey sailed along the coast of this rebellious territory, and, getting information of Rauparaha's whereabouts, he sent 150 men to make a night attack upon the village where the old chief lay. The daring adventure was thoroughly successful. Rauparaha and some of his friends lay deep in sleep, and they were captured before they could spring to arms. It is said that the great chief himself, old in fighting and bloodshed, was carried to the ship clawing and kicking like a wild beast. Yet afterwards he behaved with dignity during the time of his imprisonment, and seems to have impressed his captors as being a remarkable and highly intelligent old man. His own tribe had been utterly broken and dismayed by his capture, but Rangihaeta, his ally, to whom Rauparaha had been 'the eye of the faith of all men,' called upon the tribes to revenge the insult to his *mana*. He committed some tragic murders, as we should call them, though they were according to the law of *ata*, or blood revenge, of the old Maori code; but he was soon deserted by his compatriots, and as a single and lonely old man became harmless.

For many years there was now peace in New Zealand, and Sir George Grey made use of this time to raise the colony to a high state of prosperity. He was a just and good and a wise man, and any mistakes he made were vastly outbalanced by his successful achievements. With the Maoris he established a friendliness and confidence that was immensely valuable to the welfare of New Zealand. He studied their traditions, their language, and their national songs, and, by understanding their ideals and customs, was able to obtain many great concessions in the most peaceable way, which might have cost many years of disastrous warfare had a less able man been at the head of affairs.

He built roads through their territories, to the great advantage of the colonists, purchased large districts of unoccupied land upon terms satisfactory to the Maoris themselves, and

encouraged emigration to New Zealand so successfully that during his tenure of office immense areas in the two islands were brought under cultivation or stocked with cattle and sheep.

He also gave a liberal constitution to the colonies by establishing a number of provincial assemblies or councils for the discussion and administration of local affairs, and a central Parliament. This consisted of a House of Representatives, elected by the people, and a Cabinet nominated by the Crown. When he retired in 1853 he left with the sincere regret and affection of all the colonists, for whom he had done so much.

CHAPTER LIV

HEROIC ENEMIES

SIR GEORGE GREY himself did not stay to see the inauguration of the central Parliament, and it was his successor, Colonel Wynward, who had to face the inevitable friction and political strife which nearly always accompanies the first efforts of a colony in self-government. Gibbon Wakefield, the promoter of the New Zealand Company, was an active and influential member of the new House of Representatives, and led a strong party against a turbulent opposition to the various Ministries during this term of experimental government. To the political controversies that raged fiercely between 1853 and 1860 we need not give our attention in this work, as they related chiefly to the machinery of administration, and did not have a pronounced effect upon the colonial life of New Zealand.

Colonel Wynward's successor, Governor Gore Browne, was responsible for a number of acts of a more dramatic and dangerous character. By the ruling of the Colonial Office in England he had the entire responsibility of dealing with the native tribes, and it is generally admitted now that he was

guilty of many deplorable blunders, having the most disastrous results. Of an almost criminal character was his policy of relaxing the laws relating to the sale of arms and ammunition to the Maoris, and it is only natural that the large purchases of modern weapons by tribes who had long been dangerously antagonistic to the British supremacy in New Zealand should have inspired them with a belief in their own power for evil. Governor Browne was not without warning as to the perils that might result from this policy of carelessness. A new spirit of nationality had been growing among various powerful tribes, who had formerly been at warfare with each other, and who were now united by a common patriotism. This new sentiment was known as the King movement, by which a number of disaffected tribes joined in a league to prevent any further land being sold to white men, and decided to combine their forces under one great chief or King.

The life and spirit of the movement was Tarapipi, sometimes called the King-maker, and known by the English name of William Thompson. Through his stirring eloquence and fiery patriotism the chiefs of the Waikato tribes, after some years of discussion and controversy, elected the famous old warrior Te Whero Whero to be the King of New Zealand. At the ceremony of the native tribes when their first King was proclaimed a new flag had been prepared by the King-maker, who intertwined it with the Union Jack, saying, 'Our King will be friendly with the white Queen.' At this time the chiefs proclaimed their loyalty to the Sovereign who had given them the Treaty of Waitangi, their Magna Charta, but they refused to allow any of their land to be sold, or any foreigners to set their foot within the boundaries of the King Country, or to obey English laws within their territory, or to permit the passage of steam-boats or any English craft up their rivers.

Bishop Selwyn, who was still making heroic efforts on behalf of Christianity among the natives, wrote a solemn warning to Governor Browne, advising him to do all in his

power to conciliate the tribes. But the Governor had not the same sympathy and tact as Sir George Grey, and on one occasion, when the King-maker came to Auckland to request an interview with him for the purpose of borrowing a little money to build flour-mills for the people, the Governor refused both the interview and the loan. This was considered as an unwarranted affront. As one of the chiefs bitterly remarked, 'The lowest Englishman was entertained with hospitality by the Maoris, but a chief of high rank visiting Auckland was rudely neglected by the Pakehas.'

This smouldering animosity broke out into a blaze in 1860, in the district of Taranaki. Governor Browne negotiated for a purchase of territory on this part of the coast, and made a bargain for a large slice of land with one of the subordinate chiefs. When the news of the sale reached the ears of the head chief of the tribe he refused to allow it, and protested that the other Maori had no right whatever to part with a foot of soil belonging to the common heritage of the tribe. Governor Browne threatened war to enforce his claim, upon which the Taranaki chief joined the King confederacy and sent his tribesmen on the war-path. Along the western coast of North Island, between Wanganui and Auckland, many English colonists had set their homesteads and farms, but now they fled in terror to New Plymouth and the other English towns, and their fields were laid waste by the King tribes.

On both sides there were isolated acts of bloodshed, denounced as murder by the Maoris and the colonists, according to the nationality of the persons killed. It was a tragic business, and although there were now many regular regiments in New Zealand, the British troops were for a long time powerless to end this guerilla warfare. The Maoris took refuge in their paha, or strongholds, and when dislodged from one retired to another. They had the same genius as the Boers in South Africa for constructing rifle-pits and throwing up entrenchments, from which it was difficult to dislodge them even by artillery fire. Tarapipi or Te Waharoa

the King-maker, was as heroic in warfare as he was cunning in counsel, and with a tribe of the finest fighting men in New Zealand, defied all attempts at capture or annihilation.

For three years the war dragged on, at the end of which Governor Browne was recalled, and Sir George Grey was again sent to New Zealand to straighten the tangle made by his predecessor. By this time General Chute, in command of the British troops, obtained some decisive victories, in which many Maori warriors were killed and wounded, and the King-maker at last consented to a truce for the purpose of arranging terms of peace. Unfortunately, the prospect of ending the troubles in the Taranaki district was no sooner in sight than the Waikato tribes rose in rebellion. They were angered by an undertaking of the new Governor to push forward a road into the heart of their country, and the introduction of a steamer on the Waikato River. Again Te Waharoa, the King-maker, led the insurrection, and New Zealand was once more given over to war. Conciliation was no longer possible, and Sir George Grey, who deeply regretted the necessity for fighting a race for whom he had the highest respect and sympathy, came to the conclusion that there must be no shilly-shallying, and no more patching up of temporary truces. The Maoris had declared war, and they must be taught once for all that the British race in New Zealand was to be the dominant power.

General Sir Duncan Cameron, a Scottish soldier who had fought in the Crimea, was now placed in command of our troops, and he had at his disposal 10,000 regular soldiers, with about the same number of militia and native allies, as against about 2,000 warriors of the King Country. The odds were ten to one, but it was not going to be a 'walk-over.' The Maori tactics were baffling to soldiers trained in European warfare, and their heroism was such as to arouse the unbounded admiration of their opponents. The first episode of the new war did not redound to the glory of our own troops. General Cameron and his troops went up the Waikato River in four

gun-boats, and attacked the hostile Maoris in a pah called the Mere Mere.

The enemy fired at the boats as they approached, and when the General disembarked his men, with the intention of surrounding their stronghold, they quietly slipped away up two tributary streams in a fleet of canoes, leaving the fort deserted. General Cameron followed them to another stronghold at Rangiri, higher up the river, where they had already found time to dig an elaborate series of rifle-pits and a rampart over 20 feet high. This they defended with desperate resolution, killing thirty-nine of our men and wounding about ninety. Among the dead was Captain Mercer, the artillery officer, who lost his life in spite of the heroic exploit of a Maori chief. This man sprang out of his own ranks when the Captain fell wounded in an advanced position between the fire of both friends and foes, and at the risk of his own life carried him, though too late, to a place of safety. It was a deed worthy of the old days of chivalry.

The Maoris themselves suffered heavy loss, many women who were with them being numbered among the slain. Being surrounded, they were at last obliged to surrender, but not before nearly forty of them had escaped by swimming across a lake to the forest beyond. Among these was the famous King-maker, whose capture was worth more than the death of many of his warriors. He did not, however, desert his men, who were now prisoners, and after sending in his green stone *mērē* to the British General as a token of the highest respect, he came in under a flag of truce to ask for the release of the captured warriors, and to make honourable terms of peace. Unfortunately, General Cameron could not agree to his terms, and the war continued. General Cameron marched slowly but steadily into the heart of the King Country, and inflicted two further defeats upon the enemy.

One of the most extraordinary and romantic episodes of the war occurred at this time in the Wanganui district, where a strange type of religious fanaticism was gaining ground. A

Maori named Te Ua declared that the Angel Gabriel had come to him with the revelation of a new religion to take the place of Christianity, and to render the Maoris invulnerable against the bullets of the white men, who had departed from the true faith.

An officer named Captain Lloyd was killed, and his head was carried by the fanatics as a symbol of their religious might. The Hau Haus, as the fanatics called themselves, attacked an English outpost at Sentry Hill, and with the 'prophet' at their head, singing a wild barbaric hymn, marched calmly to the very muzzles of the guns. It was only when some forty of them had been killed by a storm of bullets that they lost faith in their leader. But even then they put down his failure to the fact that he had offended the Angel Gabriel, and they swept onwards to the Wanganui River, to convert other tribes to the new doctrine.

One of these tribes, under a chief named Mete Kingi, disputed the passage of the river and challenged the fanatics to a fair fight on the little island of Montoa. The challenge was accepted, and rules were drawn up with as much ceremony as in the days of the knightly tournaments of Europe. At daybreak both armies met on the island, and after a good deal of preliminary defiance and much singing of war-songs and hymns, advanced within a few yards of each other. Then each side fired a volley, afterwards charging with tomahawk and rifle-butts. At first Mete Kingi and his tribesmen fell back, but afterwards rallied and regained their ground. The battle surged to and fro. It was a hand-to-hand combat in which warrior fought warrior in single duel. Feats of strength and heroism were achieved on either side. All the fighting traditions of the Maori race animated the hearts of those combatants locked in deadly rivalry. No quarter was asked or given, and the *mêres* were red with blood. At last the Hau Haus were driven back to the edge of the island, and the survivors of the great battle plunged into the river to escape by swimming. Their chief was wounded in many

places, but managed to swim to the opposite bank, not, however, to save his life. One of Mete Kingi's warriors sprang into the water after him, and, with his *mērē* raised above his head, sprang upon him as he lay panting on the shore. With one fearful blow he hacked off the Hau Hau's head, and carried it back as a trophy of victory. In the history of New Zealand the combat on the island of Montoa will not be soon forgotten.

The interest of the war was now centred in the King Country, where General Cameron with his officers and men were marching and fighting in a desultory and not very brilliant way, although he was gradually wearing down the strength of the hostile tribes.

A little army of native warriors, passing through their country, came to a place called Orakau, not far from where a regiment of British soldiers were posted, under an officer named General Carey. 'This is my father's land,' said one of the chiefs. 'Here will I stay and fight.' His comrades endeavoured to dissuade him. There was no advantage in the position, and it was unfortified. But the sentiment of the chief was not to be uprooted by any argument, and at last it was decided to do as he wished, and fight on the land of his forefathers. Rifle-pits were hastily constructed and ramparts thrown up, but before the work was concluded General Carey's troops had marched upon them and surrounded the 300 warriors with an overwhelming force, numbering nearly 1,000 disciplined soldiers, with heavy guns. The Maori position was desperate. They had no water, only a scanty supply of food, and there were women and children in the camp.

For two days and two nights they were shelled without intermission, but still they held stubbornly to their rifle-pits, and endeavoured desperately to check the advance of the English sappers, who worked their ditches nearer and nearer to the Maori's entrenchments. Many of the defenders were mangled beyond recognition by the hand-grenades thrown

into their rifle-pits, and the condition of the living must have been horrible under the hot sun, without water, and amidst the fearful stench of the dead. General Carey, anxious to put an end to the sufferings of a gallant enemy, sent in a message that he would spare their lives if they would surrender. To this they sent an answer which will always live in the memory, not only of their own race, but of the white people who have made New Zealand their own. It was an answer of heroic defiance. 'We will fight to the bitter end—*ake, ake, ake*—for ever, for ever, for ever!'

Once more General Carey sent forward his interpreter under a flag of truce. 'Send out your women and children,' he said. Again the answer was one of defiance. 'The women will fight too.'

So the dreadful business went on of hurling shell and shot among those stubborn and indomitable warriors. To the marvelling ears of the British troops there was borne the sound of a Christian hymn, sung by hundreds of voices in a melancholy and pious chaunt. Then, as if the thought had come to them that the God of the English was not their God, and that they were imploring the help of an unmerciful Deity, they suddenly ceased the Christian song, and, loud and fierce and triumphant, there rang out the martial music of an old Maori appeal to the God of Battles, to the Man-Destroyer, the War-Lover, and the Avenger, to all the fierce spirits they had worshipped before the white man claimed their soil. Still chaunting this barbaric hymn, they suddenly appeared to the astonished eyes of their opponents, marching slowly and steadily in a solid column, with the women and children and great chiefs in the centre, across the camp towards a swamp on the banks of the river.

It was some moments before the British troops realized that the enemy had left their rifle-pits and were trying to escape. Then the order was given to cut off their retreat, while the guns were hurried forward to shoot them down before they could reach the river and the forest beyond. The heroic band

of Maoris did not fire a shot as they pressed steadily onwards. They held their fire until the foremost had plunged into the swamp. Then the rear-guard stood at bay, shooting fast and furiously in the endeavour to cover the retreat of the main body from the pursuing cavalry. Many of them were cut down and others were drowned in the swamp, but numbers of them got clear away after a pursuit that lasted for six miles. They had left 100 dead behind them, but this defence of 300 Maoris against 1,000 British soldiers was as heroic as any story of the ancient Greeks.

CHAPTER LV

THE LAST STAND

THE defeats crushed the hopes of the older and more prudent chiefs, but the younger men were animated by this stirring episode to continue the desperate resistance to British might. At a stronghold called the Gate Pah, in the district of Tauranga, some of these 'irreconcilables' dealt a heavy blow to General Cameron, who laid siege to it with 1,700 men. It was on a narrow ridge, flanked on each side by a dangerous swamp, and formed the entrance to the King Country. Here they had built a strong fort of palisades, and they had seamed the sides of the ridge with rifle-pits in their usual manner, where they hid effectually from artillery-fire. After bombarding it for some time, it was reported to the General that a breach had been made in the fort, and that the time was opportune for an infantry assault.

The Maoris were very quiet. Now and again a man was seen coolly piling up some earth where a rampart had been damaged by shell-fire, but otherwise there was no sign of the enemy concealed in their burrows. A rocket went up in the English lines, and an assaulting party of 300 men, under Colonel Glover, with another 300 as a reserve, under Captain Hamilton, R.N., moved rapidly towards the fort, elated and eager for

the fruits of victory. The foremost men were quickly inside the fort, which was still silent with an invisible enemy. Then suddenly from the rifle-pits with which its ground was tunnelled came red flashes, as though the earth were vomiting fire. The British troops, who had poured into the stockade by hundreds, and were now crowded together in a dense mass, found themselves in a death-trap. Captain Hamilton with his sailors rushed in to help them, but only made the confusion worse. Their officers were the first to fall.

'Captain Hamilton,' said the General in his report, 'was shot dead on the top of the parapet while in the act of encouraging his men to advance, and in a few minutes almost every officer of the column was either dead or wounded. Up to this moment the men, so nobly led by their officers, fought gallantly, and appeared to have carried the position, when they suddenly gave way, and fell back from the work to the nearest cover.'

The fact is, the men were panic-stricken, as well they might have been, by the horrible situation into which they had blundered. Expecting to walk into a fort to receive the surrender of a shattered remnant of Maoris, after some quick work with rifle and bayonet, they had walked instead into as dangerous and deadly an ambuscade as was ever planned by a crafty foe. Ten of their senior officers were killed and twenty-five non-commissioned officers and men, while in a few minutes the wounded numbered nearly a hundred. In the face of such losses few soldiers would have stood their ground, and one can hardly blame these troops for retreating pell-mell from their position.

During the night the enemy, who did not number 200 in all, slipped away under cover of the darkness in small bands, but before they left they showed their chivalry by placing a water-vessel at the side of each wounded Englishman. This water had been obtained at the peril of his life by an educated Maori Christian named Taratoa, who had crept through the English sentries at night to fill a calabash at the river, and who afterwards tended one of the wounded Englishmen until he died.

The Maoris themselves did not quench their thirst, giving every drop of the precious fluid to their enemies. Truly they were a gallant and chivalrous foe. Not even the famous story of Sir Philip Sidney is so splendid as this.

It was a bitter and humiliating blow to our soldiers, but they wiped it out by the capture of Te Ranga Pah, to which the Maoris had retreated. The fight was fierce on both sides, but the Maoris had not had time to dig their burrows, and they were unable to resist the onslaught of troops burning with the desire to avenge the death of their officers and comrades at the Gate Pah. The enemy stood the charge with heroic courage, but when over a hundred of them were killed at the bayonet-point they were forced to surrender. Among the slain was Taratoa, who had fetched the water for the wounded at the fort. On his body was found a written prayer, ending with the words: 'If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink.'

This victory brought about the end of the war. The chiefs of the King tribes saw the futility of further resistance, and sued for terms of surrender. To punish them for the insurrection a large amount of their territory was confiscated by the Government, and numbers of Maori prisoners were sent to the Chatham Islands and elsewhere under a two years' sentence of banishment.

Unfortunately, even now New Zealand could not enjoy the fruits of peace. Fighting again broke out in the Wanganui district, where the Hau Hau fanatics gave serious trouble. It was a forest warfare, which General Cameron seemed unable to cope with successfully. He spent two years in slow and tedious marches and counter-marches in a vain endeavour to capture the roving bands of marauders, who retreated skilfully as he advanced, hiding themselves in the almost impenetrable jungles, into which the British General did not care to follow them, and emerging swiftly and suddenly to fall upon the scattered homesteads of British colonists, or to burn and plunder the villages of our friendly tribes. Sir George Grey

accused General Cameron of inefficiency and slackness, and it seems that the Commander-in-Chief of the regular troops in New Zealand had lost heart or interest in his military task. When a large body of the enemy were known to have entrenched themselves in a stronghold called the Wereroa Pah, he declined to attack them without strong reinforcements, and deeply annoyed the Governor by his lack of energy and confidence. Finding that his appeals to the General failed to stir him to greater efforts, Sir George Grey took the bold and unusual course of carrying out the military operations himself. Raising a force of 500 volunteers, including various bands of friendly Maoris, under a gallant chief named Hori Kingi, and obtaining 200 regular soldiers from General Cameron, the Governor advanced upon the hostile camp, and by a brilliant series of strategic movements captured the enemy's forces on the heights above the fort, and dropped long shots into the stockade. The position of the native rebels was now untenable, and, finding themselves in danger of annihilation, they broke out of the shattered pah and fled down the cliffs. Many of them were taken prisoners, and the remainder eventually surrendered.

For this great service it might be expected that Sir George Grey received the thanks of his Government and of the English Ministry. The War Office, however, was annoyed at the thought of the military command having been taken away from a British General without their authority or consent. New army regulations were immediately issued, laying down that a Governor of a colony is not entitled to take the immediate direction of military operations. So strong was the indignation that a civil Governor should have dared to achieve a brilliant victory that Sir George Grey was censured and recalled, to the great disgust of the New Zealand colonists, who appreciated his services at their true value. Perhaps if he had remained in New Zealand his colony would have been spared another chapter of tragedy.

When Sir George Grey left the islands peace had been

established throughout their length and breadth. But in 1868 the prisoners in the Chatham Islands overwhelmed their guards, captured a schooner, and, sailing to the east coast of their native land, declared a war of revenge. The New Zealand Government had not been without warnings as to what might and did happen if they persisted in keeping some 300 Maori warriors confined under a weak guard outnumbered by about fifteen to one. The prisoners had been peaceful enough at first, looking forward to a release even earlier than the two years to which they had been sentenced; but when these two years passed away, and still they were given no prospect of being speedily returned to the land of their fathers, they became exasperated and sullen, and it was no secret that they meant to get away by guile or force. So it happened, and under the daring leadership of a chief named Te Kooti they got out to sea in the captured ship. In fear of death, the crew of this vessel were compelled to steer towards New Zealand, but a great storm arose, and it seemed as though every soul on board would be drowned. Te Kooti, abandoning the Christian faith in this hour of peril, reverted to the old superstitions of his race, and as a propitiation to the mythical gods of his ancestors, threw overboard a living human sacrifice. It was his uncle, an old and feeble man, and as the poor wretch was hurled into the devouring waves the Maoris crowded to the sides of the vessel to watch his frantic and unavailing struggles, and to hear his dying cries before he sank into the great grave of the ocean.

By one of those extraordinary coincidences, stranger than one finds in fiction, the wind abated, and the waves became calmer, so that all danger was at an end. The fierce gods had been pleased with their human victim! So, at least, thought the superstitious Maoris, who hailed Te Kooti as a chief of divine and awful power. The news of this escape from the Chatham Islands soon reached the Government at Auckland, and caused the greatest alarm.

Sir George Bowen, the new Governor, grappled promptly with the problem, and despatched Colonel Whitmore, a capable

and dashing officer, to capture the runaways, dead or alive. But before the military could get upon the scene of action, Te Kooti and his warriors, who for some time had been hiding and starving in the woods, came down like wolves upon the settlement at Poverty Bay, and murdered men, women, and children to the number of seventy with merciless ferocity. Horrible tales were told by little children who, creeping under beds or into cupboards, saw their parents butchered by the robbers and murderers. Only a few men and women escaped from the carnage, helpless to save their friends and relatives, and powerless to check the plunder of their little homes.

Retreating rapidly after these atrocities to the jungle, Te Kooti was joined by Hau Haus and other disaffected natives, who looked upon him as the hero of the Maori race, and as our own Saxon forefathers regarded Hereward the Wake. Fortunately, however, most of the Maori tribes were tired of a warfare in which they invariably got worsted, and eager and willing to help our own troops in crushing the rebels. They took an active part in Colonel Whitmore's operations, and lent him invaluable aid in tracking Te Kooti's bands to their secret lairs. Murderer though he was according to European civilization, it must be admitted that Te Kooti was a man of heroic stamp. Beaten and chased from pah to pah, from jungle, hill, and stream, his force weakened continually by killed and wounded, captures and desertions, starvation and disease, he still held out with his most devoted warriors, and at times struck fierce, deadly blows at his pursuers. For eighteen months, between July of 1868 and the end of 1869, the man-hunt was continued, Te Kooti always retreating, but always fighting until he was forced to the barren region about Lake Taupo, in the heart of the King Country. Here, when only a few dozen men and women remained around him, and when all his allies had surrendered to Colonel Whitmore and the friendly tribes, the 'wild boar' of Maori-land was left alone by the enemies, who were not loth to let him end his days in peace.

From the year 1870 there has been no further bloodshed in New Zealand. Sir Donald MacLean, appointed as the chief authority over the native races in 1869, worked indefatigably for nearly ten years, with the utmost success, in the endeavour to secure the attachment of the Maoris to British rule. Like Sir George Grey, he had a deep sympathy for the traditions and the noblest qualities of the Maori race, in many ways resembling those of his own Highland clans. By gaining their affection and confidence he was able to persuade them into many great concessions, and the chiefs, whom he treated with respect and dignity, repaid him by parting with a great deal of the land in a peaceable and friendly manner, and at fair prices. That land has, alas! been less needed by its original owners as years have passed by, for the Maori population has steadily dwindled, until at the present time not more than 45,000 native men and women remain in New Zealand.

Sadly liable to consumption and pneumonia, and other pulmonary diseases, and careless of the ordinary rules of health and sanitation, it seemed as if they were destined to be almost wiped out of existence like the redskins of North America or the blackfellows of Australia. But lately there is new hope for the race, owing to the efforts of intelligent and patriotic Maoris to educate their people in the laws of hygiene and public health, and a more civilized morality. It would, indeed, be a lamentable tragedy of history if the Maoris were to disappear from the face of the earth, for, as this narrative has shown, they have many noble and chivalrous qualities.

In a book on 'The Romance of Empire' there is no need to continue the history of New Zealand much further, nor to give any detailed account of its commercial and industrial development. As in Australia, the discovery of gold-mines—in the provinces of Otago and Canterbury—brought a rapid increase of population from 1864 onwards, and was for a time the chief source of prosperity in the colony. The gold-mining industry, however, has long since ceased to represent the greatest wealth of New Zealand, and although in a

quiet and steady way a considerable quantity of gold is still exported, its value is far out-balanced by other exports—of coal, wool, frozen meat, fruit, wine, cheese, butter, and wheat, and other produce of a country where the climate is perhaps the most perfect in the world, and where soil is as rich as in any part of the great Empire. The old provincial parliaments established by Sir George Grey were abolished in 1876, and the two islands are now under one central Government elected by the people. New Zealand is an entirely self-governing colony, and a nation as free and independent as the Australian Commonwealth. The British Crown is still represented by a Governor, but his powers are limited by the constitutional authority of the colonial Ministers, and it is only now and then that Bills are reserved for the consideration of the Imperial Parliament. But New Zealand is an integral and loyal part of the British Empire, and in the late South African War—the test and opportunity of Imperial patriotism—gallant sons of this great colony fought bravely by the side of English troops, and died for the honour of a flag as dear in the island of the Pacific as in the British Isles of the West.

PART VIII

RIVAL RACES IN SOUTH AFRICA

CHAPTER LVI

BOERS AND BLACK MEN

THE story of South Africa as a white man's country begins with the foundation of a little trading settlement at Capetown. In 1653 the Dutch East India Company decided to establish in Table Bay a 'fort and garden' for provisioning their trade-ships with fresh meat and vegetables, to reduce the horrible epidemics of scurvy which attacked their sailors on their voyages to the East Indies. About 600 Dutch men and women were induced to go out to the colony, and their numbers were afterwards increased by Dutch soldiers, who had served their time in the Indies, and by young maidens from Holland, who were sent out to be the wives of these colonial bachelors. Later on, in 1685, when the bigoted King of France drove large numbers of the best and most industrious subjects out of his kingdom by the Edict of Nantes, about 200 of these French Protestants—or Huguenots, as they were called—came out to the Cape, and became 'Boers,' or farmers, like their Dutch neighbours.

As the colonists multiplied the younger generation moved further afield from Cape Town, and their farms began to stretch northwards through what is now known as Cape Colony as far as the Fish River, which for many years became the boundary of their settlements. It was not without fighting

that they were able to do this, and in those early days the Boers developed that hardness of character, that hatred of black races, and that skill in straight shooting, which have always been their most noted characteristics. In the same way as the Early American colonists had had to fight for their land with its native proprietors, so the Boers soon came in conflict with the great African tribes, who were even more terrible foes than the North American redskins. These tribes belonged to many different races, between whom there existed constant and ferocious warfare.

The Bushmen of Cape Colony, who stole the white men's cattle, and in return were trapped and killed like vermin by the Boers, represented one of the most primitive races of the Dark Continent. They were pigmies in size, with a language of strange 'clicks,' which was but one remove from inarticulate speech, and as savage and filthy in their habits as monkeys or other wild animals. Before the arrival of the Boers, however, these people had been half exterminated by another race of a finer physique, called Hottentots. The latter were at first well disposed towards the white men, and traded with them on friendly terms. Later on they showed hostility, but their race was almost destroyed after the coming of the white men by a frightful epidemic of small-pox. The survivors were glad to seek the protection of the Boers, and willingly became their servants on farm or field.

The Bushmen, and the few Hottentots who still remained enemies, were not very formidable foes to the Boers, whose rifles were more than a match for poisoned arrows and 'knob-kerries.' But behind them, to the north and east, there existed an enormous and prolific race of black warriors, known as the Bantu, or Kaffirs, split up into innumerable tribes under separate chiefs, and during the eighteenth century the Boers had to wage an almost perpetual warfare with them in order to keep them across the boundary-line of the Fish River.

In 1781, when England was at war with France, the latter entered into alliance with the Dutch, and some French troops

were sent to defend Cape Town in the event of the English attacking that colony. The precaution was justified, for the English did attack, and with such a force that, when Admiral Elphinstone arrived in Table Bay with a body of troops under Major-General Craig, the French garrison was compelled to surrender.

The Dutch, who at that time did not much care under what flag they lived so long as they retained their liberty, language, and simple laws, did not show any resentment when Cape Colony became a British possession. The British Government sent out two successive Governors—Lord Macartney and Sir George Yonge—to look after the new Dutch subjects, but very little was done to develop or improve the colony; and when a tribe of Kaffirs, called the Kosas, swept down upon the outlying farms, burning and massacring and cattle-lifting, no help was given by British troops to check this murderous invasion, and the farmers were left to their own defence.

The English Governors, indeed, had but little sympathy or interest for the Boer people, and on several occasions treated them with undue severity and harshness, thereby sowing the first seeds of that hatred for Englishmen which, in later years, was to bear bitter fruit. It is not to be wondered at that very little regret was felt when, in 1803, the colony was handed back to Holland in return for Ceylon, ceded to us at the Peace of Amiens.

For a little while the Boers now enjoyed the liberty of practical self-government under Dutch protection, and during that period they were inspired with ideals of freedom from foreign interference from which they were never reconciled when once again they were brought under British rule. That happened after a brief spell of three years. War had again broken out between the nations of Europe, and, in 1806, General Sir David Baird came with a strong fleet to Table Bay and landed 7,000 men. This time the Dutch endeavoured to resist, but their defence was hopeless against such an army, and after a little bloodshed the colony was at the mercy of the

British General and his red-coats. Again Governors were sent out from England, and in 1814 Holland renounced all rights over her former colony upon payment by us of £6,000,000. From that day to this Cape Colony has remained permanently in our possession.

At about this time a horrible and awful conflict broke out between the great tribes of African natives, which resulted in a period of bloodshed hardly equalled in the history of mankind. South of the Zambesi River there dwelt a tribe of the Bantu race calling themselves by the boastful title of the Amazulu, or 'People of the Skies.' They were the tallest and most handsome race in Africa, and among them there was a young man named Chaka, the son of a petty chief, who was distinguished by his bravery, his strength, and his skill with their weapons of war. He was a man of keen intelligence and vast ambition, and upon becoming chief he directed all his energy to raising and drilling an army of warriors who should prove irresistible in battle. To this end he devised new weapons of war. It was the habit of the Bantu warriors when fighting at close quarters to break the shafts of their assegais for stabbing purposes. Chaka made the weapon more effective by increasing the weight and length of the blade so that it could be used as a two-edged sword. He also invented a new kind of shield, enlarging it from the old style used by other tribes, so that it covered the body completely. Having perfected these inventions, he proceeded to organize his fighting men into regiments, and drilled them constantly in all the evolutions of war, under the strict discipline of their new chief.

The women were also put to work, and had to do all the tilling of the soil and the preparation of the food, while the men were being trained as warriors. The young men of the tribe were not allowed to marry until they had proved themselves on the field of battle, and Chaka inspired them with a lust of bloodshed and conquest. Having satisfied himself that his army was now completely disciplined for war, the Zulu chief gathered together his impis, or regiments, and

hurled them upon the tribes in the surrounding territories. His orders were to spare no one but the young girls, who would become the wives of their captors, and strong, healthy boys, who would be useful as slaves and carriers for the army. All others, men, women, and children, were to be slaughtered, their villages were to be burnt to the ground, and all property destroyed except the cattle, which was to be brought to Chaka himself.

These bloodthirsty commands were carried out to the letter. Chaka and his impis marched upon tribe after tribe, slaughtering them like sheep, and exterminating every living thing save the boys and girls and the cattle. Resistance was in vain against such ferocious warriors armed with weapons far superior to those of any other tribe. The whole of South Africa was thrown into a turmoil. At the news of Chaka's approach other chiefs fled before him with their people, and in their turn attacked and massacred the less powerful tribes along their line of retreat. Among those who took flight was a tribe called the Amangwanas, 'the Little Tigers,' and, crossing the Drakensberg, they fell upon a densely populated territory now forming parts of Basutoland and the Orange River Colony. After an awful carnage the survivors of the tribes in this region were united under a woman called Ma Untatise, who led them across the Vaal River, and kept up the tale of slaughter. No less than twenty-five tribes were completely exterminated by these ferocious warriors under their woman chief.

Meanwhile Chaka was fighting his way through the region now known as Natal, his assegais sweeping the ground clear of human beings, so that not 10,000 people remained alive where once there had been 500,000 human beings. The survivors of the various tribes wandered about the country on the borderland of Cape Colony. They were called Amafengu, or vagrants, by the Kaffirs, and from this name the Europeans came to know them later as Fingoes.

After some years a revolution took place in Chaka's army.

One of his most trusted Generals, named Moselekatse, after exterminating a tribe against which he had been sent, kept back the cattle he had captured instead of sending it to his chief. Chaka was enraged beyond measure at this outrage upon his 'sacred rights,' and immediately sent word that he was coming to slaughter his rebellious General and every man that was with him. Moselekatse did not wait to be butchered, but, marching with his army at full speed into the territory of the Bechuanas, he deliberately destroyed every human being in his way, and burnt every kraal and every field of corn, so that only a blackened desert remained behind him, through which Chaka would be unable to march for lack of food. Eventually, when he was far from pursuit, he settled down near the Upper Limpopo River with his warriors and with the thousands of young women they had captured as wives, and so founded a new nation known henceforth as the Matabele.

Chaka, having lost Moselekatse, experienced another disaster, one of his impis being destroyed by a warlike tribe against whom they had been sent. At the news of this reverse a conspiracy took place among his chiefs, and one day, as he was sitting in his kraal surrounded by his 1,000 wives, he was stabbed in the back by his half-brother Dingan.

The latter, who is said to have been more ferocious and inhumanly cruel than Chaka the Terrible, though that seems hardly possible, now became chief of the Zulus, and he ruled his people so savagely that the vultures in his neighbourhood were fat with feeding on human flesh.

One other tribe in this whirlpool of blood must be specially mentioned. It was governed by a chief named Moshesh, whose methods of obtaining power were very different to the usual practice of his race. He settled down in the fertile valley of the Orange River at a place called Thaba Bosigo, a natural fortress of inaccessible mountains, so strong that no Zulu tribe could capture it. Moshesh relied on craftiness to extend his influence and strengthen his authority. He invited any fugitives from Chaka's or Dingan's cruelty to join him, and treated them so

well that they gave him their firm allegiance. At the same time he conciliated the Zulu chiefs by sending them presents of cattle with expressions of friendship and respect. When Moselekatse endeavoured to seize his stronghold he held out until the Matabele warriors were starving, and then sent them food to enable them to return to their own country. Cannibals who had killed and eaten his own grandfather were supplied with corn, and invited to become his people. He had a touch of humour, it seems.

‘The cannibals were the graves of men,’ he said, ‘and as such we would regard and respect them.’

Such was the character of the South African tribes, who formed a constant menace to the north-east and west of Cape Colony. Nor was it a menace only, for the roving bands of warriors, especially the Shoshas and the Fingo tribes, who were nearest to the Dutch settlers, would fall upon the unprotected farms, murdering the white men, women, and children as ruthlessly as they destroyed those of rival black races, burning their houses and carrying off their cattle.

In 1842 one of the few English Governors who were popular with both the Dutch and English colonists, a brave and sagacious man named Sir Benjamin D’Urban, led an expedition against these savages, and, having hammered them severely, beat them back across the Fish and the Kei Rivers, and established a chain of little forts along this line of country to protect the colony from future invasion.

But at this time a great wave of sentimentalism with regard to the treatment of black races had carried away the judgment of the British public in the mother-country. The fathers and mothers of children who slept safely in their little cots could not quite imagine the point of view of parents thousands of miles away, who lived in constant dread of returning from their day’s work to find their little ones beaten to death by knobkerries and of being burnt alive themselves or stabbed by a hundred assegais. Nor could our good clergymen in England, who had at heart the religious elevation of the heathen and the right of

every man, white or black, to have personal liberty, understand the ferocious and treacherous character of this same heathen as he was in Africa.

The London Missionary Society, a body of devoted and earnest men and women, were certainly guilty of rashness and injudicious behaviour at this period of their history. Every victory of Dutch or English farmers over the Kaffirs, and every expedition of Sir John D'Urban against the Black tribes, was represented by them as wanton oppression and cruelty. They ignored the reports of their own missionaries on the spot who reported in favour of these punitive expeditions, and listened only to the reports of more enthusiastic and less sagacious men who, in their desire to convert the savages to Christianity, were blind to the natural ferocity of men who as yet were entirely untamed by any civilizing influence.

So much pressure was brought to bear upon the English Government that Sir Benjamin D'Urban was recalled, and all his great work was undone by the troops being withdrawn from his line of forts, and the large territory which he had captured from the Shoshas and brought under British rule was abandoned once more to the barbarous tribes.

Both the Boer and English farmers in Cape Colony and the outlying districts were further exasperated by other measures enforced upon them. One of those most galling to them was what was known as the currency reform. A great deal of paper-money had been issued both by the Dutch and British authorities in the colonies, and was in common use among the farmers. There is no doubt that its nominal value was a good deal more than its actual value, but when the order from England suddenly reduced the worth of every dollar from 4s. to 1s. 6d., the Boers felt that they had been defrauded of five-eighths of their money.

Then came the emancipation of the slaves throughout the British Empire. In theory this great Act was one of the most noble and truly Christian measures that has ever been passed by the British people. It is a right and just thing that no man

should be allowed to hold a human being in bondage, with absolute power over his life, his offspring, and his labour. On the other hand, a mild form of slavery under just and humane masters is, in practice, a better thing than the absolute freedom of savage and uneducated people who do not know how to use their liberty, and, not being compelled to work, prefer idleness and squalor. It is generally admitted now that the *sudden* emancipation of the slaves in all our colonies was a mistake—a noble and generous mistake, but all the same one having for a time disastrous consequences. It was also a great hardship upon colonists, who depended upon the labour of black people, and now found themselves without sufficient hands to till their fields or to work on the farms.

The British Government had promised to compensate the masters for the loss of their slaves, but in South Africa as well as in other colonies the amount paid in this way was a mere trifle compared to the true value of the black serfs.

The Boers in Cape Colony were so disgusted with these actions of their British rulers that a large number of them determined to cut themselves off from the British Government altogether, and, abandoning their farms and homes, resolved to establish themselves in an independent territory beyond the reach of interference.

CHAPTER LVII

BOERS AND BRITISH

So began the Great Trek, which forms a new chapter in the history of South Africa. Putting all their little property into ox-waggons, and driving their cattle before them, many Boer families set out on a long journey northwards across the Orange River to the beautiful country of Natal, as it is now called, which had been desolate and uninhabited after the destroying wars of Chaka and his Zulu warriors. It was from a rugged hill called Spion Kop—a name of dreadful import to

the British in later days—that the Boers first beheld this ‘land of promise.’

Among the first of the Boer *voortrekkers*, or pioneers, were two leaders named Hendrik Potgieter and Piet Retief, who led two bands northwards to the Vaal. With the former was a lad of ten years old named Paul Kruger, afterwards to play the most prominent part in the history of the Boer people. They accomplished their journey in safety, and scattered about the district to mark out their future farms, while others explored a tributary of the Vaal River which they called the Mooi, and others, again, went further afield towards Matabeleland, where, all unknown to them, the great chief Moselekatse was settled with his army of warriors. One of these exploring parties suddenly came upon a band of the Matabele who were on a hunting expedition. No doubt the Matabele were as astonished at the meeting as the Boers, having no knowledge of the coming of the white men. But whatever their astonishment, their assegais soon went hurtling among the explorers, and only a few escaped death.

These rode at a furious pace to the main body, warning them of the danger. In the greatest alarm, the Boers put their waggons in a circle, and lashed their wheels together to form a kind of fort, and every man and boy got his rifle ready, while the women served out ammunition. Shortly afterwards they were surrounded by a great impi of Matabele warriors, who, after regarding the stockade in silence for a little while, advanced with a long, loud hiss, like a thousand rattlesnakes about to strike. But there was one lesson which every Boer learnt as soon as he could hold a gun—to shoot straight and waste no powder. Every crack of a rifle now sent a bullet into a black man’s heart, and so many warriors were killed as they hurled their assegais over the waggons, and endeavoured to break through into the little crowd of white men and women, that Moselekatse was at last compelled to withdraw, and to retreat in sullen rage.

As a compensation for their loss, however, they drove off all

the cattle which had been left outside the circle of waggons. As soon as all the Boers who had taken part in the Great Trek had assembled their forces, and laid out the foundations of a little capital called Winburg, or the 'City of Victory,' 150 of these daring farmers set out straight for Moselekatse's camp to chastise him for his theft of their cattle. It seems almost incredible that such a small force should dare to attack 1,200 veteran warriors; but so it was, and for nine days these Boer horsemen kept circling round the Matabele regiments, pouring in a deadly fire, galloping off when their rifles were empty, and again rounding upon the enemy with well-directed volleys, to retreat again at full pace when the Matabele gave chase. So terribly were the black men punished, that on the tenth day Moselekatse could endure this kind of fighting no longer, and, leaving many corpses on the field, fled with all his men to the regions beyond the Limpopo, where he remained henceforth.

For a time the Boers were able to build up their homes in peace, and very soon large and prosperous farms were scattered over Natal and parts of those territories now known as the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony. A certain amount of law and order was introduced by Piet Retief, the one statesman of the new Boer territories, giving the rights of citizenship to every white man, and establishing a kind of local government. Pietermaritzburg, Winburg, and Durban, from a collection of ox-waggons and tents, began to acquire the importance and appearance of towns, and the farmers had, on the whole, a right to feel pleased with themselves in having 'trekked' from Cape Colony.

In order to obtain the strictly legal right to settle in Natal, Piet Retief and a few companions now went on a mission to the old Zulu chief Dingana, who really owned this great territory, to induce him to hand it over to the Boers on friendly terms. Retief and his comrades were received with every show of friendship by the bloodthirsty old ruffian, who asked for time to consider their proposals. Eventually he put his

mark to a document, drawn up by an English missionary, formally handing over to the emigrants a great tract of country from the Tugela to the Umzimvubu in return for a certain amount of cattle. Apparently, however, he repented of his bargain, and three days later, when his guests went unarmed to bid farewell, he threw off his mask of friendship, and at a given signal his warriors fell upon the little band of white men and dashed out their brains.

The news of this outrage infuriated the Boers. Hendrik Potgieter set out from Winburg with a few Boers and Englishmen and a force of 1,500 friendly Kaffirs, but he fell into an ambuscade, and thousands of Zulus hurled themselves upon their enemy in overwhelming numbers. At the end of a long day's fighting only a few wounded men escaped from the human shambles.

The Zulus then followed up their ghastly victory by rushing upon the outlying farms of the Boer colonies, where they massacred forty-one white men, fifty-six white women, 185 white children, and 250 Kaffir servants.

These disasters roused all the Boer people, who found themselves threatened by annihilation if they did not check the oncoming Zulus. Five hundred farmers set out under a new leader named Andries Pretorius to avenge the massacre of their comrades. Among them went young Paul Kruger, who was perfecting his education as a warrior at an age when most lads are playing cricket and learning lessons from school-books. They came up to Dingaan's impis on the bank of a river, which was henceforth to be known as the Blood River, from the stream of gore which reddened its waters on that historic day. The Boers adopted their usual tactics: they rode round and round the Zulus, firing into their dense masses with unerring aim, and galloping off when the black men charged. By repeating this manoeuvre, time and time again encircling the enemy so that they were between cross-fire, they shattered Dingaan's army, and covered the ground with heaps of corpses.

'Of that fight,' wrote an eye-witness, 'nothing remains in my memory excepting shouting and tumult and lamentation, and a sea of black faces, and a dense smoke that rose straight as a plumb-line upwards from the ground.' The victory was complete. Dingane fled in terror with his survivors, and the Boer farmers gave thanks to God, making an oath to keep the memory of Dingane's Day for ever by building a church and holding a religious celebration on every anniversary of the great victory. Soon afterwards Dingane's half-brother, named Panda, came to the Boer leaders and offered to desert with a great impi and fight Dingane again with his own warriors if the white men would help him to become chief, on condition of his remaining their vassal. The Boers were, naturally, full of joy at this help from such an unexpected quarter, and a great battle took place between the rival Zulus, in which Dingane's impis were almost annihilated. The carnage was so great, and Panda's men so ferocious in their cruelty, that even the Boers, who were not thin-skinned with regard to black men, sickened at the horror of it, and endeavoured to restrain their allies. Dingane himself managed to escape, but, falling into the hands of a tribe called the Swazis, he was murdered out of revenge for his former cruelties to those people.

The Boer pioneers were now relieved of danger from their neighbours, and during the next twenty years they enjoyed a fair measure of peace and prosperity. In 1843, however, the British Government placed a garrison at Durban, and proclaimed the whole of Natal as a British colony. This led to a second 'trek' on the part of the Boers, who objected to being under British rule, and once more abandoning their farms, many of them retired across the Vaal to join their comrades who still retained independence.

They were now divided, partly by geographical separation and partly by different ideals of self-government, into two free States, which in time became known as the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. The former was bounded on the south by the Vaal River, and on the north by the Limpopo. A line

drawn between these two rivers would extend through about 400 miles. The country abounded in game. Over the great undulating plains of the veldt there roamed tens of thousands of antelopes, and the valleys and forests were inhabited by the giraffe, elephant, buffalo, leopard, and lion, while the rivers were full of alligators and hippopotami, so that it was looked upon as a hunter's paradise.

The Orange Free State was bounded by the Vaal and Orange Rivers, and covered a high plateau rising from 3,000 to 5,000 feet above the sea-level, with very little wooded country, but dotted over with a great number of isolated rocks called 'kopjes,' rising abruptly from its splendid pasture-land. Agriculture was very little practised by the Boers in this country, but they were successful in rearing great herds of merino sheep, cattle, horses, goats, and ostriches.

For some years the pioneers were left to govern themselves, free from interference by the British Crown, although their claim to political independence was never formally admitted. In 1848, however, the Cape Colony Government stepped in, and, without much justification, annexed this territory to the British Crown under the title of the Orange River Sovereignty.

Six years later there came a change of opinion among the Queen's advisers, who were beginning to shirk additional responsibilities in South Africa, and in 1854, against the wish of the Boers themselves, the colony was abandoned, and again became an independent republic under the name of the Orange River Free State.

In the Transvaal the same stupid inconsistency was shown by the British Government towards the Boers, but in 1877, when the colony had been brought to a low ebb by financial troubles and further native wars, it was taken over by the Crown and administered by Governors appointed by our Colonial Office.

CHAPTER LVIII

THE ZULU IMPIS

It is now necessary to retrace our steps a little in order to give a brief sketch of the progress of Cape Colony. It must not be thought that the Great Trek of 1836 had drained our own colony of all its Boer settlers. On the contrary, the majority of the population was still essentially Dutch, and English emigrants were only gradually finding their way to South Africa. The Governors succeeding Sir Benjamin D'Urban had many difficulties to contend with, chief of them being a constant warfare with the Zulus and other tribes on the frontiers of the colony.

From 1856 to 1857 is known as the year of 'the Kosa madness.' The Kosa tribes, a nation of 200,000 people, in a territory on the eastern border of Cape Colony known as British Kaffraria, were stirred up by their chiefs with a fanatical frenzy against the white men. A day of vengeance was proclaimed, when all the dead heroes of the Kosa race were to rise again from the dust, and all their enemies were to be crushed by a falling sky. It was necessary, however, said the chiefs, for the warriors to show their faith by killing all their cattle and burning all their corn, after which new and fatter beasts and fields of inexhaustible grain would spring up suddenly from the ground to reward those who were obedient to the great command. Without a murmur the Kosas fulfilled the message. The land was devastated, and not an ox or cow remained alive. But when the day appointed for the falling of the sky had come and gone, and still the sky remained in its place, the poor deluded savages lost faith in the promises of their chiefs. The latter had doubtless imagined that by starving their warriors they would incite them to destroy the Dutch and English in a war of extermination. But the plan was a ghastly failure, for the starving-time endured too long, and thousands of strong men

died like plague-stricken sheep, and a nation of warriors was turned by the wicked folly of their leaders into a host of hungry and despairing beggars, who prayed for food from the white men they had sworn to sweep into the sea.

Horrible as it was, this Kosa madness was of enormous advantage to the prosperity of Cape Colony, which had been continually endangered by the warlike tribe on its borders. British Kaffraria was afterwards incorporated with Cape Colony, a part of it being settled upon by German colonists, mostly soldiers who had fought on our side during the Crimean War, another portion being occupied by the friendly tribe of Griquäs, in the hill-country, known from that time as Griqualand East.

No sooner had one tribe been thrust back over the borders than another went on the war-path, and the actions of our Generals in South Africa were hampered by the timidity and sentimentality of the Government, who periodically ordered an abandonment of territory which had been captured by hard fighting and the cost of many valuable lives. In this way the work had to be done over and over again. Eventually, however, Sir Harry Smith, one of our most gallant old soldiers, Sir George Cathcart, Sir George Grey, Sir Bartle Frere, and Lord Chelmsford, successively shattered the power of the Basutos, the Swazis, the Pondos and the Kosas, the Kaffirs and the Zulus, so that vast territories in South Africa were brought under British rule or protection.

The last Zulu War was the most serious struggle we ever had with that great nation of warriors, which for many years had been the terror of South Africa. At this time it was ruled over by a chief named Cetewayo, who had for some time been recruiting the strength of his impis after the wars of his predecessors, and was now preparing to wrest back some of the territory which had been taken from his nation by the Transvaal Boers.

Sir Bartle Frere, who heard of his restlessness, decided, strongly against the advice of the Crown officials in South

Africa, to send an army into Zululand to obtain the chief's submission. Cetewayo immediately declared war, and Sir Bartle Frere then instructed General Thesiger (afterwards better known as Lord Chelmsford) to undertake the military operations. This General divided his army into five columns, which advanced separately into the heart of the enemy's country. One of these, under Colonels Durnford and Pulleine, comprising four companies of the 24th Regiment and a native contingent, encamped at the now historic spot of Isandula, on the left bank of the Buffalo River. Here they were surprised by an impi of 18,000 Zulu warriors.

General Smith-Dorrien, then a young Lieutenant, had been out scouting some miles from camp when he suddenly perceived the advancing Zulus. They were very close, and gave chase as soon as they cast eyes on him. He set spurs to his horse and galloped for dear life, with a crowd of yelling Zulus after him. Presently as he rode he came to another young officer on foot, who asked leave to hang on to his stirrup-leather to help himself as he ran. In this way they went along, gradually outdistancing their pursuers. But after a while Smith-Dorrien's friend lost his wind, and suggested that he should get up on the horse. His friend assented, and got down to give the other man a leg up. But, to the horror of both of them, the officer was no sooner in the saddle than the horse, panic-stricken by the wild yells of the Zulus, bolted off at a mad gallop, leaving Smith-Dorrien to the mercy of the fast-approaching enemy. It was now a race for life. The Zulus are considered the swiftest runners in the world; but the Englishman was a public school athlete, and he ran faster than ever before in his life. For two miles he sprinted steadily ahead, and at last got into camp. It was none too soon. Eighteen thousand black warriors surrounded the British regiment of 800 men, and attacked them with the utmost ferocity. Our brave lads, under Colonel Pulleine, resolved to sell their lives dearly, and for hours they kept at bay the swarms of savages, who tried to rush them, and get to

close quarters with their short stabbing assegais. Two thousand Zulus bit the dust that day; but, with their overwhelming numbers and a fierce courage that knew no fear of death, they got closer and closer to the British regiment, whose ranks were now being broken by the storm of assegais. At last, when the powder was nearly spent and death was very close, Colonel Pulleine called to Lieutenant Melvill, and said: 'You, as senior Lieutenant, will take the colours, and make the best of your way from here.' Then he shook Melvill's hands, and, turning to the men who still lived, he said to them cheerfully: 'Men of the 24th, here we are, and here we stand to fight it out to the end.'

The end came when the last bullet had been fired, and the savages swarmed upon the heroic British soldiers, and butchered them with assegai and club. Only a few escaped from that field of death. Young Melvill himself, before the last rush, got away on a good horse with the precious colours of his regiment, accompanied by Lieutenant Coghill and Private Williams. They were hotly pursued, and upon reaching the Buffalo River Williams was swept off his feet by the current and drowned. Then Melvill's horse was killed by an assegai, and the colours slipped from the young officer's grasp. Lieutenant Coghill had got across in safety, but, seeing the plight of his comrade, he rode bravely back, regardless of his own safety, to lend a hand to the swimmer. Probably they would have escaped if the one remaining horse had not been killed at this moment by the enemy.

'The Zulus opened a heavy fire,' says the official despatch, 'directing it more especially on Lieutenant Melvill, who wore a red patrol jacket. There are, not many hundred yards from the river bank, two boulders, within 6 feet of each other, near the rocky path. At these boulders they made their last stand, and fought until overwhelmed. Here we found them lying side by side, and buried them on the spot where they fought so well and gallantly. There is no need to remind Englishmen of their conduct. While we remember the Zulu War it will

not be forgotten. They did not die in vain. Ten days after they fell the colours were found in the rocky bed of the Buffalo.'

This great tragedy at Isandula, and the blundering of the other British columns under Lord Chelmsford, cast a deep gloom upon the spirits of the English colonists, as well as upon those at home. The horror of the massacre was, however, partly relieved by the gallant episode of Rorke's Drift. Here Lieutenants Chard and Bromhead, with eighty men of the 24th (the regiment that was cut up at Isandula), who had been left to guard the commissariat stores and hospital, made an heroic defence against 4,000 Zulu warriors. Their only defences consisted of piled-up biscuit-tins and rice-bags, with which they extemporized a rampart; but behind these they kept the enemy at bay, and six times in succession drove out parties of the savages who had leapt over the barricade. One of the heroes of the defence was the chaplain of the 24th—'good old Parson Smith,' as he was called. While exposed to the hottest fire, he went about behind the biscuit-boxes, encouraging the men, getting their ammunition ready, attending to the wounded, and handing round water to the thirsty soldiers. As the small body of men, who seemed to be facing certain death, cursed the hideous crowd of savages facing them, Parson Smith, his great red beard making him a conspicuous object to the foe, repeatedly roared out, 'Don't swear at them, my lads. Shoot the devils!'

The enemy at last retired from the siege of such an indomitable little force, and as long as the survivors lived each man among them was esteemed a hero. Parson Smith himself was held more than worthy of the Victoria Cross, but for some reason or other—probably because in theory he was a 'non-combatant'—this reward was not given him.

After this incident Lord Chelmsford still went blundering on, and his conduct of the campaign was so strongly criticised that the British Government sent out Sir Garnet Wolseley to supersede him in his command. Before the arrival of the

new General, however, Lord Chelmsford redeemed his reputation at the Battle of Ulundi, where at last he shattered the combined impi of Cetewayo. The savages fought with desperate and magnificent courage, hurling themselves again and again against the British square, but our guns mowed them down like grass, and at last, with the capture of the chief, their resistance was at an end.

Wolseley followed up the victory by storming the stronghold of another Kaffir chief named Sekukuni, who had been a formidable enemy along the Limpopo River, and for some time to come the black races of South Africa learnt a proper fear and respect for the British.

CHAPTER LIX

THE TRAGEDY OF MAJUBA HILL

MEANWHILE during the thirteen years that the Transvaal had been a Crown Colony the condition of affairs among the Boers had not been at all satisfactory as far as the British Government was concerned. For a time this nation of farmers, exhausted by their financial difficulties and native wars, had submitted to British rule as a temporary evil. There was, however, continual smouldering animosity against our countrymen in South Africa and an ever-present desire for independence. This was fostered by the Boer patriots like Pretorius the younger and Piet Joubert, and above all by one man who was beginning to have more power and influence among his people than any other of their chosen leaders. This was Paul Kruger, whom we first met with the 'voortrekkers' as a lad of ten years old. He was now a middle-aged man, who had taken part in many a fight with savages, and, remembering the struggles and hardships of his parents in their attempt to get free of British rule, was animated with a bitter dislike for our dominating power in South Africa. He had served as

a Vice-President of the Republic in its days of independence, and by astute and not very scrupulous means had acquired a solid prosperity which secured the respect of his fellow Boers.

A man of dogged resolution, with a firm belief in the future of his race in South Africa, supported by the conviction that they were the chosen people of God, he was a type of all that was hard, narrow, superstitious, and shrewd in the character of the Boers. It was due largely to his corruption in public office and to his aggressive actions against the native tribes beyond the Transvaal that Sir Theophilus Shepstone, the Governor of Cape Colony, had advised the annexation of the Republic in 1876.

But Kruger was never reconciled to this loss of independence, and he made two journeys to London with the object of persuading the Colonial Secretary to give self-government again to the Transvaal Boers. Failing in this, he plotted secretly for an insurrection, stirring up the animosity of the farmers against their 'oppressors.'

When Mr. Gladstone became Prime Minister a small tax was demanded of the Boers for the Imperial revenue. It was instantly made the plea for an armed revolt. A 'declaration of rights' was drawn up and sent to Sir Garnet Wolseley, who promptly imprisoned the delegates. Then Commandant Cronje, a name soon to be more familiar to us, with a party of armed men, rescued a waggon which was being forcibly sold by auction to pay for the obnoxious taxes. Events moved quickly. In December, 1880, Paul Kruger, Andries Pretorius, and Piet Joubert, were appointed as a triumvirate for a 'Provisional Government of the Transvaal Republic,' Joubert being named also as 'Commandant-General of the Boer Army.' At a meeting of 5,000 farmers, assembled from all parts of the Transvaal, each man swore an oath to be faithful to the cause of liberty, solemnly placing a stone on what became a great heap as a commemoration of that pledge. Then, raising their voices and singing a hymn, they raised the four-coloured flag of independence.

On Dingan's Day, December 16, 1880, Commandant Cronje marched to Potchefstroom and captured the British garrison and camp. Commandant Joubert then waylaid a body of British troops under Colonel Anstruther on the way to Pretoria. This officer—like too many others in later days—had a supreme contempt for the Boers, and neglected the most elementary rules of war by not throwing out scouts as, with full warning, he advanced through a hostile country. Falling into Joubert's carefully prepared ambushade, a large number of his men were killed and wounded, and he was compelled to surrender.

Other Boer commandos now besieged the British garrisons at Pretoria and various towns of the Transvaal, holding them closely invested, although they were unable to capture them, owing to a complete lack of artillery. The Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in South Africa was a gallant soldier named Sir George Colley. As soon as the news of the Boer rising reached his ears he hurried from Natal towards the Transvaal with 1,200 soldiers. This body of regular troops seemed to him sufficient to keep in check a miscellaneous army of undisciplined farmers until he could be reinforced from Cape Colony. He hopelessly underestimated the fighting qualities of the insurgents, as these same men were underestimated twenty years later.

At Laing's Nek, a narrow pass through the Drakensberg Mountains, General Colley was attacked by Joubert's commando, and suffered such heavy losses that he was forced to fall back and throw up trenches for shelter. Then he learnt some days later that his communications with Pietermaritzburg were cut by a body of farmers under Nicolaas Smit. His supplies were so limited, and his situation so serious, that Sir George Colley left his entrenched position, in person, with about 500 men, and made a gallant attempt to capture the approaching enemy. They kept well to cover, however, as Boers invariably do when fighting, and their wonderful skill with the rifle told heavily against our soldiers, General Colley got back to

camp at Laing's Nek, leaving many dead bodies on the field. He was now between two forces, and the prospect was very gloomy. There seemed but one chance of escape and victory. Above the camp rose a high peak called Majuba Hill. If that were occupied in time the British guns might repel every assault and make the enemy's position untenable.

Accordingly, as night fell, on February 26, 1880, the soldiers crept up the ridges of the rugged peak, and were firmly established on the summit when the dawn broke next day and revealed them to the astonished eyes of the Boers, 2,000 feet below. Before giving his orders for the ascent General Colley wrote a touching letter to his wife, from which it seems that, in spite of this strong position, he had forebodings of his fate.

'I am going out to-night,' he said, 'to try and seize the Majuba Hill, which commands the right of the Boer position, and leave this behind, in case I should not return, to tell you how very dearly I love you, and what a happiness you have been to me. Don't let all life be dark to you if I don't come back.'

'It is a strange world of chances; one can only do what seems right to one in matters of morals, and do what seems best in matters of judgment, as a card-player calculates the chances, and the wrong card may turn up and everything turn out to be done for the worst instead of for the best. But if one sticks to this steadily I don't think one can go wrong in the long-run, and, at any rate, one can do no more.'

Unfortunately, in this case, the 'wrong card' turned up. Although the Boers never, as a rule, made an attack in the open, not setting themselves up for that kind of fighting, they determined to try the hazard, and with dogged courage swarmed up the great height like ants, taking cover at every boulder, and then at the last gaining the summit with a rush. Poor General Colley fell with a bullet in his brain, and the hill was soon strewn with corpses. One of the surviving officers—Major Frazer—had a remarkable escape by losing

his footing and crashing down the slope for 200 feet, until he was brought up by a bush in a ravine, bruised and torn but otherwise unhurt. Here he lay until he was sure that his comrades had surrendered and that all was lost. Then, when the night came, he made his way through the mist to the British camp at Mount Prospect.

Falling over rocks, tumbling into streams, tearing his way through tangled undergrowth, bruised and bleeding, and soaked to the skin, he guided himself with his pocket compass, and at last found himself looking down upon the enemy's laager at Laing's Nek. Once again he lay waiting for the night, and then succeeded in getting through the Boer outposts and reaching the British entrenchments beyond with the news of the disaster.

Many acts of heroism took place on Majuba Hill during the last stand, and the Victoria Cross was given to one man who specially distinguished himself. This was Corporal Farmer, who won the admiration of all his surviving comrades for attending to the wounded under fire. As he was bandaging a wound both he and the fallen soldier were hit. Springing up, he waved a handkerchief as a signal of truce, but at the same moment his right arm was struck by another bullet and fell powerless to his side. 'Never mind,' he shouted gaily to the wounded man, 'I have another arm,' and he again raised the white rag, but again a bullet passed clean through his arm, and he dropped in agony, losing consciousness until he found himself a prisoner.

Another gallant deed was done by a young Lieutenant of the Gordons, named Hector Macdonald, afterwards renowned as 'Fighting Mac.' With twenty of his men he held a hillock against the Boers until eight of the Gordons were killed and all the others—including himself—were wounded. Then he surrendered, but his fighting spirit was still up, and when a Boer tried to seize his sporran as a trophy, he sent the man flying with a kick. The Boer levelled his rifle, and would have killed him, but he was restrained by another

farmer, who said, 'Don't shoot; he is too brave a man to kill.' Later in the day Commandant Joubert came to him, and handed him back his sword. It was inscribed with the fact that it had been presented to him by the men of his company when he was promoted out of the ranks. 'A man who has won such a sword,' said the Boer General, with a kindly smile, 'should not be separated from it.' Sir Hector Macdonald, as he became in later years, never forgot that chivalrous act nor those generous words. 'Those men are gentlemen,' he used to say. Nevertheless, his dearest wish was to wipe out the disgrace of that defeat of Majuba Hill, and twenty years afterwards, at Paardeberg, as he stood by the side of Lord Roberts when Cronje surrendered his sword, he felt that at last Majuba was avenged.

Mr. Gladstone, who was Prime Minister when the news of the disaster reached England, had always been averse to the annexation of the Transvaal, and he now decided to yield to the general desire of the Boers for independence, without further bloodshed. Into the right or wrong of that decision we need not enter now. It was a generous act, whether wise or unwise, but the Boers, as well as many men of British race in South Africa, interpreted it as a craven submission after defeat. The Dutch in the Transvaal, the Orange River Colony, and Cape Colony were as much astonished as they were overjoyed. But from our countrymen there rose a howl of rage and humiliation at what they thought was a heavy blow to British prestige and honour.

On August 8, 1881, Paul Kruger, General Joubert, and Andries Pretorius signed a document, handed to them by Sir Hercules Robinson, the British Commissioner, formally providing for the complete self-government of the Transvaal Republic. There was one clause, however, in this historic agreement which occasioned the most bitter controversy both then and later. The new State, although self-governing, was declared to be under the 'suzerainty' of Her Majesty Queen Victoria. How little or how much that term might mean

was differently interpreted by Boers and British, and that interpretation, at a later date, was only settled by the dread sentence of war.

CHAPTER LX

DIAMONDS AND GOLD

THE history of South Africa, as already seen, was the continual clashing of race against race, of white men against black men, of tribe against tribe. Yet it is safe to say that none of the bloodshed which drenched the soil of the great 'veldt' so changed the fate of the country and altered the conditions of life there as the discovery which must now be related.

In the year 1867 an Irishman named John O'Reilly, travelling through a district of Griqualand West, put up for the night at a farmhouse belonging to a Boer named Shalck van Niekerk. After supper, he sat watching the little Dutch children playing at the old game of knuckle-bones. Suddenly he leaned forward with an exclamation, and took one of the pebbles which were being used for the game. As he held it up it flashed with a strange blue light. O'Reilly turned to the farmer, and in an excited voice said, 'I believe that's a diamond!' The Boer laughed at him, and said he might have it if he liked, as there was plenty of that sort of rubbish lying about in the river clay. O'Reilly pocketed the stone, and said that if it were worth anything he would give the farmer half its value. Again the old farmer laughed. He thought his friend had a bee in his bonnet like many other British folk. However, as it turned out, O'Reilly was not mistaken. When the stone was examined by a Jew dealer, it was found to be a diamond worth £500 at the very least, and for this price it was eventually purchased by Sir Theophilus Shepstone, the Governor of Cape Colony.

The discovery caused profound excitement in South Africa, and as the news of it spread abroad, thousands of Englishmen

set out from the Cape to see whether other diamonds were lying about in the neighbourhood of Van Niekerk's farm. The old Dutchman began to look round himself, and it came to his ears that a Hottentot witch doctor had a magic stone resembling the pebble which had been used for knuckle-bones. Van Niekerk managed to get possession of this, and when it had been examined he found himself the owner of one of the finest gems the world has ever seen. He sold it for £11,200, and as the 'star of the South,' its radiance attracted treasure-seekers from every civilized country. Adventurers poured into Africa, and with pick and shovel invaded Boer territory in search of diamondiferous soil. For some time their search was but little rewarded, but in 1870 some diggers discovered diamonds on the farm of a Boer named Hans de Beers. He was an old-fashioned man of primitive tastes, and declared with some violence that he did not want any 'dirty diamonds,' nor any 'dirty diggers.' He was willing enough, however, to part with his farm for £600, and immediately 'trekked' off with his little fortune to a place where he might be undisturbed by both diamonds and diggers, for which he had such extreme dislike.

Soon afterwards the ground was sold for £100,000, and in the course of nine years diamonds to the value of £12,000,000 were turned up from the now famous De Beers and Kimberley mines. During the next twenty years there was a tremendous rush of diggers, who not only found diamonds, but rich gold-fields, in Matabeleland, the Transvaal, and other South African territories. The greatest 'finds' were made after the Boers had been given their independence, otherwise it is probable that the morality of the British public would not have been proof against the temptation of holding such a treasure-laden territory, in spite of all desire of the Boer farmers for self-government.

Nevertheless, Dutch prejudices were not strong enough to check the invasion of English speculators and diggers, or of Jew dealers and financiers, who at this time cared nothing for political franchise, and were willing enough to put up with

the political tyranny of the Boer Government for the sake of amassing fortunes on this 'Tom Tiddler's ground' of gold quartz and diamondiferous soil. Great towns sprang up on the lonely veldt, or where the Dutch farmers had built their primitive white-washed houses; and Johannesburg, Kimberley, Pretoria, and other cities were crowded with populations of miscellaneous nationality, including, it must be admitted, some of the biggest rascals under the sun. The gold and diamond mining fever raged not only in South Africa, but infected the public of English and other European countries to such an extent, that swindling stockbrokers and fraudulent company promoters reaped an ill-gotten harvest.

Every rock and reef within a measurable or immeasurable distance of the Witwatersrand district round Johannesburg, famous, or infamous, under the name of 'the Rand,' was bought up by company promoters, and 'floated' upon a too credulous public who were long in learning the simple lesson that all is not gold that glitters. Thousands of people were ruined by putting all their hard-earned money into bogus mines, and those who made enormous fortunes out of the diamonds and gold that really existed in South African soil were few in comparison to those who lost their all in speculating for treasure that existed only in their imagination or in picturesque prospectuses.

In course of time this game of the company promoters was played out. The public became more chary, and hundreds of companies failed and were wound up. Even the genuine diamond-mines were not always 'paying concerns,' owing partly to mismanagement and partly to a glut in the market, which forced down the price. If diamonds become too common, like other commodities subject to the law of supply and demand, they become cheap. In 1885 there took place an amalgamation of the Kimberley mines which practically covered the whole of the South African diamond-fields yet discovered, and by this means the output was limited from time to time, and the price kept up to the requisite figure for a handsome profit. 'De Beers, Limited,' as the new

amalgamated company was called, controlled the whole of the diamond market of the world. It is estimated that £4,000,000 are spent every year upon the glittering baubles, and of this amount fully £3,500,000 came for a very long time from the De Beers and Kimberley mines. To the original shareholders, therefore, it was perhaps the most lucrative investment in Mother Earth.

CHAPTER LXI

CECIL RHODES

THE man who brought about the amalgamation above mentioned was destined to play an important part in the history of South Africa. His name was Cecil Rhodes, and the story of his life is one of those romances which give a vivid and personal interest to the long narrative of our Empire building. For many years Rhodes's name stood for South Africa. His dominant personality stamped its impress upon every important measure that was passed; his master mind was the source of every development and expansion that was effected in the natural resources and territory of our South African possessions. The story of his remarkable life must now be briefly narrated.

He was born on July 5, 1853, three months after the British Government had decided to abandon the sovereignty of the Orange River State and eighteen months after the signing of the document by which Great Britain first recognised the independence of the Transvaal State. He was the fifth son of the Vicar of Bishop's Stortford, and in the quiet environment of a cultured home Cecil Rhodes acquired a love of books and a certain dreaminess of imagination that never left him even after long contact with the rough side of the world. Religion, French, and the classics were his strong subjects, and history and geography favourite ones, but in mathematics he was strangely deficient. The lad having a somewhat delicate

constitution, his father abandoned the idea of making a soldier of him, and destined him for the Church ; but in 1870 a chill on the lungs frightened his parents, and instead of going to Oxford he was sent off to his brother, who had left the family circle to try his fortune as a cotton-planter in South Natal. On his brother's plantation he quickly built up a hardy constitution, and kept his eyes and ears open regarding South African affairs. The diamond boom had just begun, and in 1871 the two brothers, catching the diamond fever, sold their plantation, and, making their way across Africa, staked out a claim at Colesberg Kopje.

Two years later, however, upon the advice of his family, which coincided with his own wishes, he returned to England to enter at Oriel College, Oxford. During the whole of the period covered by his University career it was his custom to spend the summer term at Oxford, and then after six months or so to go back to the Cape and the diamond-fields.

'A stranger landing in Kimberley in those days,' says Mr. Howard Hensman, one of his biographers, 'and seeing Rhodes in his shirt-sleeves, seated on an upturned bucket, sorting with keen eyes the diamonds from the gravel on an improvised table in the open air, or reading a text-book for his next examination at Oxford, one eye on the volume and the other on his native workmen, would have found it hard to believe that in this man the destinies of South Africa were virtually bound up. To all appearances he seemed to have no other object in life than his books and the successful working of his diamond claims.'

To this dual existence, however, was due Rhodes's complex character, for whereas in the rough contact with Mother Earth all his ruggedness and strength and practicality were developed, on the other hand, in the calm retreat of college life, amidst the influence of classic books and cultured intellects, he was led to build up theories, ideals, and great aims. There is not the slightest doubt that at Oxford Rhodes defined his vocation. It is not given to every man to have his goal set before him on the

threshold of his career, but with Rhodes it was so, and, instead of acting blindly, stumbling step on step till he blundered into a definite policy, he knew his aims at the outset, and every action of his life afterwards was in pursuance of that road marked out.

‘Just a quarter of a century later,’ wrote one of his tutors, ‘Rhodes has told me that even then he was fired with an ambition to advance the boundaries of civilization by extending the British Empire to the regions beyond.’

‘That is my dream,’ he said once in those early days, drawing his hand across the map of Africa—‘that all red.’

With these ambitions he decided that to further them he must become rich, and to this end he set his whole mind with the indomitable energy and perseverance which were his chief characteristics. It was between the years 1873 and 1881 that his successful speculation in diamond-mines made him a multi-millionaire, and gave him the necessary means for the political career he had mapped out for himself. At Kimberley he contracted four friendships which stood him in good stead. These were C. D. Rudd, Rochefort Maguire, Alfred Beit, and Dr. Jameson. This coterie joined hands and embarked in daring speculation, which was vastly successful, so that towards 1880 Rhodes considered the time ripe for the first step in his political ambitions.

He was elected a member of the Cape House of Assembly for Barkly West, near Kimberley, the constituency which he retained until his death. Rhodes’s maiden speech startled everyone by its power. It was in opposition to the proposed disarmament of the Basuto tribes, and his eloquence had a marked effect upon the counsels of the Cape Government, which referred the whole question to the High Commissioner, Sir Hercules Robinson, who acted according to Rhodes’s advice. At the close of the Basuto War Rhodes was appointed a member of the Commission of the Cape Parliament, appointed to proceed to Basutoland to decide what compensation was to be paid to the natives who had remained loyal to the Cape.

Here he came in contact with General Gordon, the 'Christian Hero' who was afterwards killed at Khartoum.

'You always contradict me,' said Gordon to Rhodes one day. 'I never saw such a man for his own opinion. You think you are always right and everyone else is wrong.'

In spite of this, however, Gordon had a high opinion of Cecil Rhodes as a young man of power and promise.

During 1881-1882 Rhodes gave all his mind to the question of the boundaries of Griqualand West, which he saw was intimately connected with his one great desire—British expansion to the north. He realized that the object of Paul Kruger—now President of the South African Republic, with the strongest, shrewdest brain in South Africa itself—was to build a wall of Boer territory to shut off Cape Colony from intercourse with the hinterland, and Rhodes nerved himself for a duel with the man he had marked as his great antagonist.

Seeing that the Boers wished to acquire Griqualand and Stellaland, Rhodes thought he would be first in the field, and pressed the Cape Government to assume the control of the territory. But the Cape members were nervous of further responsibility, and the British Government, to whom he then resorted, were no more favourable. Rhodes was thoroughly disheartened, but a new political event played into his hands. This was the sudden annexation by Germany of a large slice of territory now known as German West Africa. The British Government, at the instigation of Sir Hercules Robinson, prompted by Cecil Rhodes, retaliated by declaring a protectorate over Bechuanaland and Griqualand, thus check-mating Kruger's own designs upon that territory. Rhodes had triumphed so far. The trade route from Cape Colony to Central Africa had been secured to the British.

The political schemes of Rhodes were for a while interrupted by gambling in diamond-mines on a huge scale. He found his own company of the De Beers mine pressed by sundry enterprising rivals, the chief of whom were two young Jews,

'Barney' Barnato and Woolf Joel. Rhodes declared war all round, and after a struggle of extraordinary keenness, he forced his rivals to amalgamate with him, to his own enormous advantage as a controlling power. As chairman of the De Beers Consolidated Mines, Limited, he was now vastly wealthy, yet in justice it must be said that he did not use his riches for any mere personal gratification of luxury. Although, as he himself declared, he was a millionaire ten times over, he probably spent less upon himself than many of the junior officials in his employ. It was for his vast schemes of colonial expansion that he desired money, and having made it, he turned again to his ideal.

His next big political game was to play for the possession of Mashonaland and Matabeleland. By astute diplomacy he frustrated President Kruger again, and obtained from Lobengula, chief of the tribes in those territories, a monopoly in the right to search for gold and other metals. He now decided to apply to the British Government for a charter for a trading company. This was granted, and on October 29, 1889, the British South Africa Company, popularly known as 'the Chartered Company,' was floated with a capital of £1,000,000. With Rhodes as the master-mind, it became the dominant power in South Africa, and its actions, for good or ill, are writ large in the history of the ten years following its foundation.

At the age of thirty-seven Rhodes became Premier of Cape Colony, and in his dual capacity as chairman of the Chartered Company and Prime Minister of the Cape Parliament, upon his shoulders fell the enormous task of developing the vast territories so hurriedly and, as many thought, so rashly acquired. Things went ill. The climate, the natives, the tsetse fly, all conspired against the early settlers of Mashonaland and Matabeleland. But Rhodes steadily pushed on his railways and telegraph-lines, opening up the country, and fought 'tooth and nail' against the strenuous opposition of his Boer rivals.

Then came a crushing blow with the outbreak of the Matabele War. It was one that a deplorable lack of judgment on the part of Rhodes had brought upon himself. In striking a bargain with Lobengula for the monopoly of gold-digging in Matabeleland, he had actually agreed to pay tribute in rifles and ball-cartridges. Such folly was almost criminal, and nothing can wipe out this great blot upon Cecil Rhodes's career. The least sagacious mind might have expected that one day those rifles and cartridges would be turned against British colonists and soldiers. That was what actually took place in 1892 when Lobengula's braves went on the war-path. Rhodes was utterly unprepared, and taken wholly by surprise. Only a few months earlier he had said in London at a general meeting of the Chartered Company, 'I have not the least fear of any trouble in the future with Lobengula.' So may the most astute men be misled at times by their own optimism! The outlook was black in the extreme, but, thanks to the dash and energy of Dr. Jameson, Major Goold Adams, and the Bechuanaland Border Police, Lobengula and his Matabele warriors were cowed, not without some tragedies on our side, such as the death of Major Wilson and his comrades, who made an heroic last stand before falling under the overwhelming numbers of the enemy.

Rhodes's next move, now that this black horror was averted, was to build a line of railway from Cape Town northwards through the Transvaal to the gold-fields of the Rand, as the first instalment of his great dream of the future—a 'Cape to Cairo' railway. In this scheme he was supported by his own Parliament, and by a majority of the Boers. President Kruger himself was fiercely opposed to a British railway-line passing through his territory. Shrewd old man that he was, he already saw that the independence of his State was threatened by the English population in its midst, as yet without a franchise, but already clamouring for a share in the Government under which they lived. It seemed to Kruger that a railway-line owned by British shareholders would bring

him still more dangerous subjects, and he fought hard to prevent it. In this, however, he was against the majority of his own people, and at last he submitted with a very bad grace.

Once again Rhodes had scored a point in his long duel with the Boer President. But the President tried to checkmate his rival by means of excessive rates on the Transvaal section of the railway, hoping to compel merchants to send their goods via Delagoa Bay and the Netherlands Railway Company running through the Boer Republic. By this and other means of a remarkably tricky character Kruger very nearly defeated Rhodes. But he went a step too far by an action famous at the time as 'the closing of the drifts.' He was bold enough to proclaim that no goods whatever could be brought into the Transvaal over the fords of the Vaal River, thereby stopping a regular service of ox-waggons which Cecil Rhodes had organized for conveying the farmers' goods to a point of the railway beyond the control of the rival company.

This prohibition raised a storm of protest not only from the British, but from the Dutch in Cape Colony and the Boers of the Orange River State. Kruger and the Transvaal stood alone, and when Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, who had just become Colonial Secretary, threatened war if the obnoxious regulation was not abolished, the Boer President was prudent enough to withdraw from his position. Again Rhodes had beaten Kruger fairly and squarely, but on the last day of this same year, 1895, an event occurred which at one blow toppled the Cape Premier from his pedestal of power, and launched the British Government into a dilemma which had disastrous consequences. This was the famous Jameson Raid, which first revealed to Europe the tension of the political situation in South Africa.

CHAPTER LXII

THE JAMESON RAID

It has already been explained that the population of Johannesburg, the city of the Rand, was mainly composed of British mine-owners, speculators, diggers, and others employed in the gold-mining industry. These men had no political status in the Transvaal, and their demands for the right of voting in the legislative elections were steadily refused by President Kruger and his colleagues. To obtain the franchise fourteen years' residence in the Republic and other arbitrary conditions were required from any alien, so that it was practically impossible for the British residents to have any voice in their own local government. Many other causes of complaint existed against the authorities of the Transvaal. It was asserted by the miners that they had found the country in a condition bordering on bankruptcy, and had raised it to a position of great wealth, yet they had no voice in the public expenditure, and their needs were completely neglected. Owing to onerous duties, the heavy expenses of railway transport, and the monopoly of dynamite used for blasting purposes, the expense of the mining operations was excessive. It was alleged also that there was much corruption existing among the Boer officials; that no Englishman or other alien in the republic was sure of getting justice in the courts of law, as only Boers served on the juries, and were notoriously prejudiced against all foreigners; and that there was inadequate protection to the lives and properties of the British residents in the Transvaal. Some of these charges were undoubtedly exaggerated, but there was a fair element of truth in them, and great exasperation was caused by the dogged refusal of President Kruger to grant numerous petitions for the redress of these grievances.

At last, finding that peaceful protests were without avail, the leaders of the Rand put on foot a plot for a protest of a more

startling character. Arms and ammunition were secretly introduced into Johannesburg, with the assistance of money, contributed partly by Cecil Rhodes himself, who, unfortunately for his reputation and for the peace of South Africa, took an active part in this dangerous movement for reform. It was then secretly arranged that Rhodes's chief lieutenant and most intimate friend, Dr. Jameson, with Sir John Willoughby and other officers holding the Queen's commission, should move with a force of Rhodesia Mounted Police to the frontier-line between the Transvaal and Natal on the pretext of danger from the native tribes, and at a given signal from the insurgents in Johannesburg, headed by Colonel Rhodes, the brother of the Cape Premier, should advance upon that town, while other friends in Pretoria were to seize the Boer arsenal and Government offices. By this means it was expected that President Kruger would be scared into considering the demands of the reform party, and that the British Government would intervene in favour of their oppressed subjects.

The first part of the programme was carried out at the end of December, 1895, when Dr. Jameson and Sir John Willoughby rode with 500 troopers and eleven field-pieces across the borders of the South African Republic. But already the scheme had broken down, for the 'National Union' in Johannesburg were quarrelling among themselves as to which flag they should rally under, and sending messages to Rhodes at Capetown for advice as to whether the British flag should be raised in the event of a successful revolution or whether the republic should be maintained in a purged and purer form, with equal rights for British and Boers. Dr. Jameson, chafing at this delay, and fearing that the Boer Government would raise the alarm if he stayed too long on the border, moved forward before the Johannesburgers were prepared to receive him.

In the light of after-events it is incredible that 'Dr. Jim' should have believed himself capable of invading the Transvaal successfully with a few companies of mounted police. He quickly learnt the penalty of his folly.

At the news of his coming the Boer farmers shouldered their rifles, mounted their horses, and rode hard to Krugersdorp to hold the passes through which the raiders would have to make their way. Dr. Jameson and his troopers were caught in a trap. In vain they tried to dodge the Boers and get round the hills in another direction. Finally, as they tried to break through at a defile called Doornkop, they found themselves between the cross-fire of the best marksmen in the world. The game was up. Having lost eighteen killed and with about forty wounded, Dr. Jameson could do nothing but surrender to Commandant Cronje and the farmers.

The sensation caused by this event was profound, not only in South Africa, but throughout Europe. Against Rhodes especially, who, not without some justice, was suspected of engineering the conspiracy, there was a great outcry from all those who had long disapproved of his bold policy of expansion in South Africa, and of his high-handed methods generally. He was compelled to resign the position as Cape Premier, being succeeded by Sir Gordon Sprigg. The constitution of Rhodesia was changed, and he was no longer chairman of the Chartered Company. Except in Kimberley, where he was always idolized, he lost at one blow the confidence of the British people in South Africa and much of his power as an 'Empire-builder.'

President Kruger had all the cards of the game in his hands, but it has been admitted by even his bitterest opponents that in those days of excitement following the Raid he behaved with moderation. Sir Hercules Robinson, the High Commissioner, who on behalf of the Imperial Parliament had repudiated the action of the Raiders and forbidden any British subjects to assist them, offered his services to the republic as mediator between that Government and the reform party, and the offer was accepted.

Eventually the prisoners were handed over to him, the unpleasant task of punishing them being thrown upon Great Britain. Meanwhile Colonel Rhodes and seventy of the

reforming party in Johannesburg had been arrested and placed on trial at Pretoria, Rhodes and three others being sentenced to death for having signed a letter inviting Dr. Jameson to come to their assistance, while all the others were sentenced to two years' imprisonment or to heavy fines and banishment. These sentences were not carried out, as President Kruger was appealed to by thousands of compassionate people in South Africa on the score that to prevent racial hatred in the future justice should be tempered with mercy. The death sentences were commuted to fifteen years' imprisonment and the other sentences reduced. But even these were not fulfilled, and in 1897, the year of Queen Victoria's jubilee, the prisoners were liberated as an act of grace. In England Dr. Jameson, Sir John Willoughby, and other gentlemen who had taken part in the Raid were put on their trial and sentenced to brief terms of imprisonment, but on account of ill-health during confinement they also were liberated at the end of a short period.

CHAPTER LXIII

THE MATABELE

CECIL RHODES himself was now summoned to England to appear before a Parliamentary Committee appointed by the British Government to inquire into his public conduct, and the extent, if any, of his complicity in the Raid. Before he set out, however, for this unpleasant proceeding, he was called upon to deal with a new trouble in South Africa. Taking advantage of the withdrawal of the Border Police by Dr. Jameson at the time of the Raid, and resenting the increasing population of white men in their territories, the Matabele again rose in rebellion. Rhodes at once joined a column of his Rhodesia Horse, under Colonel Beal, and moved rapidly to the relief of Bulawayo, a new town that had been erected on the site of Lobengula's chief kraal, which was besieged by the black warriors.

A running fight was kept up with the enemy nearly all the way, during which Rhodes exposed himself to their fire with a reckless disregard of death. Before arriving at Bulawayo, the Rhodesia Horse were reinforced by a strong column of regular troops, sent forward by the Imperial Government, under the command of Sir Frederick Carrington, and including Major R. S. S. Baden-Powell, Colonel Plumer, Prince Alexander of Teck, and other officers, who afterwards became more famous in the Transvaal War. The Matabele offered a stiff resistance, but after some severe fighting they were forced back to their mountain fastnesses known as the Matopopo Hills.

The rainy season now came on, and Sir Frederick Carrington decided to withdraw to winter-quarters, and wait till the following spring before continuing his operations. This delay was irritating beyond measure to Cecil Rhodes in his nervous state of mind at that time, and with the Parliamentary Committee to be faced by him in the near future. He went to Carrington, and expressed his wish to go alone to the Matabele chiefs, and see whether his influence was not still strong enough to bring about their submission without further bloodshed. At first Sir Frederick Carrington refused point-blank, but so strong were Rhodes's representations, and so complete his confidence in the successful issue of his scheme, that Carrington at last consented, with the warning that Rhodes was going into the jaws of death, and must accept the responsibility for his own actions.

Rhodes immediately set off upon the most dramatic and perilous adventure of his life. He took with him an old hunter named Johann Colenbrander, who spoke the Matabele language fluently, Dr. Hans Sauer, two or three other trusted companions, and a native guide. Rhodes absolutely prohibited any show of arms, and only revolvers were secretly carried by his little escort, while he carried nothing but a light riding-whip.

Upon arriving at the pass to the Matoppos, the guide was

sent forward to ask for a peaceful reception of the envoys. The chiefs were holding an 'indaba,' or palaver, and were deeply surprised at the news that the great Cecil Rhodes was in their neighbourhood. After a lengthy consultation, they sent the guide back with the message that they would be glad to see their old friend Johann again, but that they did not dare to hope that the great white chief would favour them with his presence. In any case, however, the little party would be received as welcome guests, and would be unharmed in any way.

Rhodes was profoundly glad when he heard this friendly message, although many a brave man in his position would have feared treachery. Too often have Europeans been barbarously murdered after putting trust in the fair promises of African warriors. But without a moment's hesitation Rhodes and his companions plunged into the mountain pass, and entered the Matabele camp. Thousands of black men in full war-dress were assembled on the mountain ridges, and immovable as statues, silent as the rocky boulders, watched the little band of white men passing through their midst. At a sign of wavering or fear, at a single word from one of their chiefs, they would have swarmed down with their assegais and butchered the strangers without mercy. But Rhodes marched on with head erect and bold, observant eyes, and a mouth grimly set, without the least sign of the anxiety which even he must have felt during those thrilling moments. Then a white flag fluttered over the summit of the hills, and a long procession of chiefs and warriors moved down in single file to meet the visitors, quickly forming a semicircle round them, and squatting upon the ground to commence the indaba.

'It was a striking scene—the four white men, to all appearance entirely unarmed, surrounded by the hordes of rebel Matabele, whose dark skins gleamed in the sunlight like so much polished ebony, and on whose hands the blood of so many cruelly-butchered white men, women, and children were scarcely dry; while enclosing them on every side were the

sheer walls of dark granite, and above the bright, dazzling blue of the tropical sky. It was a study for a painter.'

After many ceremonial greetings on either side Johann Colenbrander, who acted as interpreter, urged the chiefs 'to tell their troubles to Rhodes, their father, who had come among them with peace in his heart.' Thus invited, the chiefs responded by enumerating their grievances against the Chartered Company, among which were the tyranny of the white police, and the seizing of their cattle as a punishment for Lobengula's war. Rhodes listened patiently, and then answered them point by point, promising them more freedom in the future, and the protection of their property, if they would keep the peace. Having pacified them in this way, he suddenly changed his tone, and to the great alarm of his companions broke out into a passionate burst of anger, reproaching them violently and harshly for having dared to murder helpless women and children. 'For that,' he said, 'you deserve no mercy!' The Matabele listened to his anger with bowed heads in submissive silence, seeking to avoid the burning eyes of 'their father, Rhodes.' Then, after a pause, he said, slowly and impressively, 'The past is past and done with. But what of the future? Is it to be peace or war? Will the Matabele prefer to go on fighting the white men, whose numbers are increasing daily, or shall the struggle come to an end?'

Thus he finished, and breathlessly his friends waited for the answer, upon which such great issues hung. The chiefs were silent and deep in thought. With that wonderful calm of savage people they sat without the slightest change of feature or the movement of a muscle. Then at last the oldest chief of the tribe rose, and lifted a light wand above his head. 'See, here is my rifle,' he said: 'I cast it at your feet.' He picked up the rod again, and again let it fall. 'See, here is my spear: I cast it at your feet.' Immediately the warriors rose to their feet with loud guttural shouts and the banging of assegais upon their shields, and thus signified their approval of this token of peace. The Matabele War was at an end, and Rhodes had

achieved a bloodless victory. As he rode off, and after many friendly and respectful signs of homage from the Matabele, he turned at the entrance of the rocky amphitheatre where the indaba had been held, and, gazing back for a few moments, said in a voice of deep emotion, 'It is such scenes as this that make life worth living.' Then he rode on again to Bulawayo with eyes that seemed to look into the future, and in a silence that to his companions was more eloquent than words.

After this great and really noble adventure, which, in the record of his life, must outbalance many of those faults from which—like the rest of men—he was not free, he had to face the Parliamentary inquiry in England. He was closely cross-examined by Sir William Harcourt and other members of the Committee, and admitted that he had assisted the revolutionary movement in Johannesburg 'with his purse and influence,' and further, that, 'acting within his rights,' he had placed upon the borders of the Transvaal a body of troops, under Dr. Jameson, prepared to act in the Transvaal in certain eventualities. The finding of the Committee was an emphatic repudiation that Cecil Rhodes had any right whatever to place troops upon the frontier of a friendly power with a view to invasion, and a straightforward verdict that he had been guilty of 'grave breaches of duty to those to whom he owed allegiance.'

CHAPTER LXIV

THE UITLANDERS

So ended that disastrous chapter of folly, the Jameson Raid. But the consequences of it were yet to come. President Kruger and the Boers, both of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, were now convinced that their future prosperity and independence were seriously menaced by British aggressiveness in South Africa. Large sums were set aside by both States as 'secret service money,' and an immense amount of

ammunition and armament was smuggled into the Boer territories. Meanwhile their fears and racial bitterness were further inflamed by a demand from Mr. Chamberlain, as Secretary of State for the Colonies, for a more adequate system of franchise being extended to British residents in the Transvaal. President Kruger responded, proposing that differences between Great Britain and the Republic should be submitted to the arbitration of a Swiss court. To this Mr. Chamberlain replied that arbitration was out of the question, owing to the suzerainty of Great Britain over the Transvaal. The use of the word 'suzerainty,' which had never been heard as regards the relations between the two countries for many years, was vehemently repudiated by President Kruger and his colleagues. It was not denied that the Transvaal Republic was subordinate to Great Britain to the extent of entering into treaties with foreign Powers, but this, it was maintained, meant nothing like 'suzerainty,' and the obnoxious word had been dropped out of the Convention of London in 1881, when the independence of the Republic had been fully acknowledged, and the relations between Great Britain and the Transvaal fully defined. Mr. Chamberlain held to the point that, because the word had not been used in the second treaty, it did not cancel the use of that word, decisively mentioned in the first treaty after the conclusion of the war in 1880. Putting that on one side, however, he now proposed that a meeting should take place at Bloemfontein between President Kruger and the new High Commissioner, Sir Alfred Milner, who had been appointed to succeed Sir Hercules Robinson. It was expected that some friendly agreement might be arrived at after full discussion and deliberation of both sides.

The Conference took place in May, 1899, but resulted in nothing. The High Commissioner demanded a full franchise for all Europeans in the Transvaal after five years' residence in the country. President Kruger refused this absolutely on the score that, with a hostile majority in the Republic, its

independence would be destroyed. Afterwards he agreed to give the franchise after seven years' residence, but Mr. Chamberlain, before acceding to this, desired to appoint a Commission to inquire into the practical effects of such a measure. Again there was a deadlock, for President Kruger would not submit to a Commission. He made a counter-proposal that he would grant the franchise after five years' residence as demanded, provided that the claim of suzerainty was dropped, and that all future differences should be referred to arbitration. This did not satisfy Mr. Chamberlain, and the President, after considerable delay, at last accepted the former proposal of a joint Commission, but he was informed that it was now too late. 'What, then, are your final conditions?' asked President Kruger. To this the British Government were slow in replying, and meanwhile, on October 7, an army corps was called out for service in South Africa, and British troops were massed upon the borders of the Transvaal. This action was regarded by the Republic as a declaration of war, and they retaliated by sending an ultimatum to Great Britain, couched in insolent terms, demanding the removal of our troops from the border within twenty-four hours. Such an ultimatum has seldom been received by this country from a hostile Power, and it caused a great outburst of anger from the British public. Even many of those people in this country who had sympathies with the Boer efforts to retain their independence now felt that this insult must be answered by the dread sentence of war. The Boers, however, did not wait for any formal declaration, and on October 7 the Orange Free State joined hands with the Transvaal, and the first Boer commando crossed the frontier and invaded Natal. Thus began that great and dreadful struggle which cost so many valuable lives on both sides and drenched South Africa in blood.

CHAPTER LXV

THE ARBITRAMENT OF WAR

WHEN the cables of the world quivered with the message that the Boers had invaded British territory in South Africa, and when the news-boys in the streets of English cities yelled the tidings of war, there were not many people in our own country who imagined even in their gloomiest moments what a long and terrible struggle was in store for us. There were many people, on the contrary, who, partly from that sporting instinct which favours the weaker side, and partly, alas! from that morbid sentiment and unpatriotic spirit which induces some men to believe the best of the enemy and the worst of their own countrymen, condemned the war as the wanton aggression of a great Empire upon the liberties of two feeble little Republican States. The great majority of the British race, in the colonies as well as in the mother-country, having no doubt as to the justice of our cause, and remembering the glorious traditions of the British army, believed that in a month or two our Generals in South Africa would be dictating terms of peace at Pretoria.

At the War Office itself there existed more optimism than anxiety. In its pigeon-holes there were one or two memoranda from men on the spot, written some time before hostilities broke out, urging the immediate despatch of a large army, and warning the Government of the tremendous preparations that had been made by the Boers. But few people in the Government, and fewer still among the public at home, had any conception of the immense amount of war material which ever since the Jameson Raid had been passing across the seas from Europe to Africa, in harmless-looking packing-cases labelled as 'Hard ware,' 'Furniture,' or 'Musical instruments,' and finding its way unhindered to the Transvaal through Cape Colony itself. This lack of knowledge of what had been taking

place under the very noses of British officials was only equalled by our ignorance of the Boer country and the Boer character. The Intelligence Department of the War Office was ill-provided with maps, not only of our enemies' territory, but of our own colonies in South Africa, and it was quite in the dark as to the number of fighting men which could be raised in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. It was even more in the dark as to the fighting qualities of those men who were now in arms against us. To the War Office, the army, and the public at home, who were indeed of one mind in thinking that no prolonged resistance could be offered by untrained, ignorant, old-fashioned farmers to disciplined British troops, officered by experts in the art of war. Only those who remembered the history of South Africa, who knew something of the way in which the Boers had fought against savage tribes, and something of their dogged character, their stubborn courage, their skill with the rifle, their religious fanaticism, and—since Majuba—their arrogant contempt of British soldiers, only these allowed themselves to think of the difficulties and dangers of the task before us.

In South Africa itself there was a deeper understanding of what this war would mean. The British residents at Johannesburg, who had already made a wild rush from the city to our own territory, were pretty well acquainted with the tremendous efforts made by the Boer Government to obtain large supplies of the very latest type of war material. In Natal and Cape Colony British colonists knew how little trust could be placed in the loyalty of the Dutch, who had long enjoyed all the privileges of British citizens, but still had a racial hatred for their rulers.

It must not be forgotten that the majority of people in our own colonies of South Africa were of Dutch extraction, and there was not the slightest doubt that the sympathy of many of these 'Afrikanders,' as they are called, was mainly on the side of the Boers. Our armies would therefore be surrounded by a hostile people who, even though for prudence' sake they

might not take up arms, would act as spies to the enemy, and as secret foes. When the war broke out we had only 12,000 troops in South Africa. Strong reinforcements were on their way across the sea, but before they could arrive there was no knowing what irreparable mischief might be done if the combined commandos of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State were to fall swiftly and fiercely upon Natal and Cape Colony, and, with the help of Dutch rebels, endeavour to carry out their boast of driving the British into the sea. Such were the naturally anxious thoughts of many people whose farms and homesteads would be the first to bear the brunt of Boer invasion.

Nevertheless, there was no 'attack of nerves' even among those who had most to lose. Hardy young colonials left their farms and enrolled themselves in volunteer regiments, to do gallant work under the name of the Natal Rifles and Natal Mounted Police, and many of the wealthy 'city men' of Johannesburg, who had been the first to protest against the tyranny and corruption of the Boer Government, showed they were willing to fight for their cause by joining the now famous Imperial Light Horse.

Nearly all these loyalists were a part of the main army, concentrated at the important railway junction of Ladysmith, under General Sir George White, upon whom the duty fell of holding back the Boers until the arrival of the reinforcements. The regular troops consisted of the 2nd Gordon Highlanders, the 1st Gloucesters, the 1st Liverpools, the 2nd Royal Rifles, and the 2nd Rifle Brigade, with some splendid cavalry, consisting of the 5th Dragoons, 5th Lancers, and a detachment of the 19th Hussars, in addition to the mounted volunteers. For artillery there were the 21st, 42nd, and 53rd Batteries of Field Artillery, No. 10 Mounted Battery, the Natal Field Batteries, and the 23rd company of Royal Engineers. In all, this little army numbered about 8,000 men, and Sir George White was aided by Sir Archibald Hunter, General French, and General Ian Hamilton.

Forty miles from Ladysmith, along the line of railway, was an advanced post of 4,000 men, at Glencoe, five miles from the station at Dundee. This was held by General Penn Symons with the 1st Royal Irish Fusiliers, the 2nd Dublin Fusiliers, the 1st Leicester Regiment, the 18th Hussars, three companies of mounted infantry, and three batteries of field artillery.

Sir George White was strongly opposed to this division of his army, and desired General Penn Symons to fall back from Glencoe and join him at Ladysmith. Unfortunately, however, he allowed himself to be persuaded against his better judgment by General Symons and other advisers, who were of opinion that much damage would be done to our prestige if Glencoe were abandoned without a fight. General Symons himself was confident that he could hold the place successfully against the Boer commandos, and was desperately anxious for the honour of striking the first blow at the enemy.

News soon came that strong forces of Transvaalers and Free Staters were converging upon the northern angle of Natal, which runs up like a sharp wedge between the two Republics, with the rugged Drakensberg Mountains on its western frontier, with the Buffalo River on the east, and with its gateway at the ill-omened pass of Laing's Nek and Majuba Hill. No attempt was made to bar their entry to this dangerous defile, and the commando, under a famous old Boer named Lucas Meyer, took possession of Charlestown at the top of the wedge, and then marched in a leisurely fashion to Newcastle, which they also occupied without opposition. British scouts now came falling back with the news of their approach, and also with information of other forces making for the Drakensberg passes on the west, and for the Buffalo River on the east.

General Penn Symons would have been justified in feeling a little anxious, his advanced position being threatened in front and on both flanks by an enemy of whose numbers he was quite ignorant. Like all British soldiers at this time,

however, he had a superb contempt for the Boers as fighting men, and awaited their approach over the hills with an eagerness which counted on easy victory.

In front of his camp, which lay in a hollow, there rose a long sloping, grass-covered ridge named Talana Hill. Prudent generalship would certainly have entrenched that hill before the enemy could get possession of the heights. But gallantry, not prudence, was the characteristic of General Penn Symons.

On the morning of October 20, 1899, before the soldiers had been allowed to get their breakfast, the mist on the hill slowly lifted, and revealed a line of moving dots climbing like ants up the summit and clustering in bunches on its jagged edge. Suddenly, as our soldiers stared up in surprise at this sudden appearance of the enemy, a curious wailing sound came through the air, and a shell buried itself in the soft turf within a few paces of General Symons' tent. Our gunners and their officers opened their eyes very wide. That shell, which opened the Boer War, must have come from a range of 5,000 yards. There was not a gun on our side which would carry anything like that length. It was the first of many surprises that were to open the eyes, not only of our soldiers in South Africa, but of the Government and people at home.

General Penn Symons, however astonished, was not dismayed. He ordered forward some gun-batteries, and they were soon barking at the hill. But on the heights there was no sign of dismay, and the artillery officers bit their lips and looked glum. Our shells were digging up the turf far below the enemy's feet. Meanwhile the big gun on Talana was sending more well-aimed shells into the British camp, and the Boer batteries were getting to work. From the outskirts of Dundee, however, there came the rattle of the 13th and 16th batteries, who tore across the plain, and in less than ten minutes after the firing of the first Boer shell unlimbered on a rising ground within effective range of Talana. The gunners were good men and true, and in less than fifteen minutes they

silenced the artillery on the sky-line, which was then withdrawn below the crest.

General Penn Symons now ordered a general advance, to be the first in that long series of frontal attacks which has made the very name a horror to British ears. The hill was in front of us, the enemy at the top. True to the 'good old traditions' of the British army (good enough, perhaps, in the old days, but much too expensive in modern warfare), there was a grand assault upon the enemy's position, with but a feeble and half-hearted attempt to get round their flanks with the cavalry. The Dublin Fusiliers, the Royal Irish, and the King's Royal Rifles had the honours and the losses of that wild day's work. They advanced with magnificent dash up the hillside, and met with the deadliest rifle-fire that had faced British soldiers since the War of American Independence.

Early in the battle General Symons, who was a conspicuous object to the enemy owing to his being accompanied wherever he rode to superintend the action by an orderly with a lance and red pennon, was struck in the stomach by a bullet. He turned to Major Murray, who was with him, and said, 'I am severely, mortally wounded.'

Murray helped him on to his horse, from which he had dismounted for a moment, and then galloped off to General Yule to tell him that he must take command. Upon getting back to camp the dying General was surrounded with soldiers, who were much disheartened when they saw his plight. To them he tried to show a cheerful face.

'You are fine fellows, all of you,' he said to a group of privates. Then, turning to an officer, he said: 'Tell General Yule my accident is but slight, and I hope to be out to-morrow.'

Alas! in a few days he died in the hands of the enemy.

Meanwhile General Yule, who was now in chief command, sent forward some more men to join in the assault of the hill. With splendid gallantry the officers led the scramble to a low wall, which afforded the only cover up the slope, now swept

by long waves of lead. Some of the men could not face it, and doubled back. Others were falling fast, especially the officers, who were picked off relentlessly by Boer marksmen. But still the general advance went on, with occasional pauses as the men were able to get shelter in the dip of the slopes, which ascended in terraces to the ridge. Then only a last rush was needed up an almost precipitous incline to gain the summit. The artillery from below, which had been sweeping the crest with its shrapnel fire, now ceased for a while to let our men gain the ridge, and the voice of Colonel Gunning, of the Rifles, shouted the advance in a clear, shrill voice which rang out above the din. The men responded with splendid courage, but the Boers kept their ground and shot with the same deadly accuracy. Colonel Sherston, a nephew of Lord Roberts, was among the first to fall, and many other brave fellows bit the dust. But the onrush of the Rifles and the Irish Fusiliers was irresistible, and at last Talana Hill was won, and the Boers streamed down the slopes on the other side.

The victory was ours, but it was marred by a disastrous accident. Our own artillery, whose view of the summit was hindered by the rising ground, opened fire again, ignorant of the fact that the hill had been taken. To the horror of the men who in the hell of the Boer bullets had fought their way desperately to the heights, they found themselves under a storm of shrapnel from their own guns. Officers and men were dropping everywhere. For a few moments it seemed as if they were to be annihilated by their comrades. Colonel Gunning stood up and in a voice of thunder shouted, 'Stop that firing!' In another moment he fell dead. Then a signaller of the Irish Fusiliers sprang on to a boulder and, standing in the very face of the gunners, endeavoured to call them with his flag. The shelling was now stopped, but not before the crest had been abandoned by the victors.

Fortunately, however, the Boers were still in retreat, and Talana was again held by our men soon after the horrible mistake had been discovered by the artillery officers. The

retreating Boers made their way in a long procession, hindered by ox-waggons and big guns, right in front of his artillery, at no longer range than 1,000 yards. But Colonel Pickford's guns remained silent, the commanding officer not realizing his great opportunity, and the Boers streamed off to live and fight again another day.

One other mishap must be recorded. Early in the battle Colonel Möller, with a cavalry force, had been detailed to cut off the Boers in the rear, and to charge them upon their retirement, if that could be effected. By a tragic blunder Colonel Möller lost his way in the hills, and eventually was surrounded by a large force of Boers, under a leader named Erasmus. He took shelter in and around a farmhouse, but when the Boers brought up some heavy guns, and his ammunition was falling short, he sent up the white flag and surrendered.

'It was a famous victory' at Talana Hill, but it was notable for nearly all those blunders that afterwards were to spell defeat more often than victory.

General Penn Symons had allowed himself to be surprised at the eleventh hour through defective scouting. He had let the enemy fight on their own ground—on top of a hill; he had ordered a frontal attack; the gunners had fired on their own comrades; the retreating Boers had not been molested, and a detached body of British troops had surrendered more easily than was quite consistent with honour. Nevertheless, in this battle also were all the qualities that redeemed even our blunders and disasters. The officers were—everyone—full of fire and dash, and were almost too reckless of death. The men had faced a deadly rifle-fire with admirable steadiness and the utmost courage. They had forced their way up a steep hill under a storm of bullets, and they had shown an individual heroism worthy of the finest traditions of their race.

CHAPTER LXVI

THE BATTLE OF LADYSMITH

OUR officers and men had certainly learnt one lesson as the result of this day's battle—they had learnt that the Boer farmers could shoot straight and hold their ground against British infantry. They were an enemy worthy of our steel. General Yule himself came to the decision which poor Penn Symons should have taken some days before—that the advanced post at Glencoe was an indefensible position against the enemy, approaching from all sides. Wisely he resolved to retire to Ladysmith while there was yet time. He was unaware how soon he might be attacked by a fresh commando, and in order to move swiftly he was compelled to leave behind the wounded—including the dying General—at Dundee. It was a painful and humiliating thing, but military critics have upheld it as strictly necessary under the circumstances. So, after a hard-fought battle, and through a heavy rain-storm, which made the road a swamp, the men marched that forty miles, wet to the skin, hungry and tired, but still so cheerful that, when they reached the outskirts of Ladysmith, welcomed by the cheers of the inhabitants, they came in with a sing-song.

'They had been marching,' wrote one of the 1st Devons, 'for fifty-seven hours on two biscuits per man, and on seven hours' rest. Our regiment, out of our pockets, gave the Dublin Fusiliers a good feed, which they devoured like wolves. They were simply starving.' That tramp is justly considered as one of the pluckiest things in the history of the war.

Meanwhile, as they had been marching, Sir George White had thrown out a strong force under Generals French and Ian Hamilton to intercept the attack on their flanks from the Boer commando, which had now entered Natal through Botha's Pass, and were mustering on the hills of Elands-laagte. French

had made a reconnaissance with his cavalry, expecting to find only a few hundred men, but his scouts came in with the news that at least 2,000 Boers were on the ridge. He telephoned to Ladysmith, and soon reinforcements came up steadily under Ian Hamilton, so that French felt himself strong enough to begin the fight. He had the Gordons, the Lancers and Dragoons, the Manchesters, newly arrived at Ladysmith, some batteries of artillery, and the Imperial Light Horse. To his infantry Ian Hamilton pointed to the crest of the hills. 'The enemy are there,' he said. 'I hope you will shift them out before sunset—in fact, I know you will!' To the cavalry French said: 'Men, you are going to oppose 2,000 or 3,000 Dutch. We want to keep up our honour as we did in the olden times—as soldiers and men we want to take that position before sunset.'

To both these speeches the men answered with rousing cheers. Then, late in the afternoon, the advance began up a slope of 800 feet to the top of the ridge. The Boers were well hidden behind the rocky boulders. Not a glimpse of them could be seen, save here and there the brim of a slouch hat or the glint of a rifle-barrel. They shot, as before, with a hail of bullets that swept down the grass slope, shaving it as close as a razor. Men in khaki fell in bunches, but the others still swarmed up, getting a little respite in the hollows and dips between the sloping terraces of grass.

Colonel Chisholm, a dashing fellow who ran forward waving his sword, was killed as he stooped to help up a wounded trooper. The Gordons and the Imperial Light Horse were racing each other up that hill of death, while the pipes of the Highlanders skirled out in a frenzy of wild music. One of the pipers, Kenneth Macleod, was severely wounded, but he dragged himself along, still playing, until a bullet came and smashed his drone, chanter, and wind-bag. The upward rush could not be checked even by the fierce hail of bullets which came from behind every kopje, and the Gordons, Manchesters, and Imperials gained the summit with a roar of exultation.

Then the Devonshires came up, and the whole of our infantry was on the ridge. The two Boer guns were silent, surrounded by a little heap of dead, while one brave man stood there alone, refusing to run. Here and there little groups of Boers still resisted. Some surrendered, but the rest fought till they died. Further off, another ridge was still held by the enemy, and the cheering soldiers were about to race across to chase the Boers from the rocks when, to their amazement, a bugle ran out with the 'Cease fire!' and then the 'Retire!' It seemed incredible, but discipline is strong, and the men began to fall back, while the Boers crept out towards their guns. Then suddenly the trick was discovered: the enemy had learnt our bugle calls. 'Don't let us have another Majuba!' shouted Captain Mullins, of the Imperial Light Horse, and at the same moment a little bugler of the Gordons rushed forward, and with a shout of 'Retire be d——d!' blew the 'Advance!' with panting breath. Once again our men bounded forward, the hill was cleared, and the cavalry rode down the fugitives, doing some horrid work with their lances.

The victory was a more substantial one than at Talana Hill. We had got the two guns and 200 prisoners, and on the ground lay 250 killed and wounded. Our own losses were 40 killed and 220 wounded, about the same as for the first battle, but with more to show on the other side.

That night our troops and their prisoners camped on the hill, and the Boers were given the warmest places at the fire. Scattered among the boulders lay many wounded men, not yet found by the stretcher-bearers, owing to the darkness and the rough ground. 'One cannot imagine anything more pitiful,' wrote an officer afterwards, 'than to sit out there all night and hear the groans of the wounded and dying. . . I am glad one of my Tommies stayed with me, for he wrapped me up in his great-coat and lay with his arms round me all night to try to keep me warm. If he hadn't, I am afraid I should have pegged out, for it was bitterly cold, and I could not move at all.'

A smaller action was fought at a place called Rietfontein on October 24, for the same purpose of covering General Yule's retreat from Glencoe. The result was successful as far as that was concerned, but we lost some good officers and men.

Sir George White now called in his scattered forces, and the whole army was massed at Ladysmith. His best plan would have been to stay there on the defensive until Buller and his First Army Corps, already nearing South Africa, had arrived in full strength. But Sir George White and his officers did not consider this to be the way of honour, and once again it was decided to strike a blow at the commandos which were still pouring into Natal through the passes on every side. Lucas Meyer, who had been defeated at Talana Hill, was now reinforced by General Joubert's commando, and forces under Botha and Christian De Wet, two of the younger Boer Generals destined to earn undying fame in this war. For a front of something like seven miles the hills opposite Ladysmith were occupied by these combined forces of the enemy. Their mobility was so much greater than our own that it was never possible to determine their exact position, and they had a perfect genius for dragging heavy cannon up great rocky heights and for shifting their batteries from one place to another as soon as they had been 'located' by our gunners. It was, therefore, an evasive as well as a formidable foe which Sir George White engaged in a straggling, spasmodic, and confused fight, which for want of a better name is called the Battle of Ladysmith.

Our General divided his army into three columns. On the extreme left the Irish Fusiliers and the Gloucesters, with No. 10 Mountain Battery, under Colonel Carleton and Major Adye, were sent a long way from the main body to occupy an isolated ridge called Nicholson's Nek, from which they were expected to harry the retreat of the enemy in the event of a British victory. It was Major Adye who had suggested this bold move, but Sir George White afterwards accepted the full

responsibility of it. In the centre General Ian Hamilton commanded the Gordons, Devons, Manchesters, and some newcomers of the 2nd Rifle Brigade; while here also Colonel Downing had massed six batteries of artillery. On the right was General French with his cavalry and Colonel Grimwood with a strong brigade of infantry, composed of battalions of the Royal Rifles, Leicesters, Liverpools, and Dublin Fusiliers. At the commencement of the battle it became plain at once that our guns were heavily outclassed by those of the enemy. One gun especially, mounted on Pepworth Hill, threw enormous shells—the largest that had ever burst over a battlefield—for a distance of four miles. Our own little 15-pounders sounded like the barking of curs compared to the deep roar of a forest lion. It is needless here to describe in detail the various episodes of that confused battle. Our men fought with unequalled gallantry, but Grimwood's division was especially hard pressed, and for a time it seemed as though they would be surrounded by the Boer forces, who kept closing in upon them and continually bringing forward fresh guns. Reinforcements were hurried forward, but at this critical moment of the battle a message reached Sir George White from Colonel Knox, commanding for the time being in Ladysmith, that to all appearances a large force of the enemy were about to descend upon the town. This was a grave danger, and White immediately ordered Grimwood to retire towards the threatened town. It was not without severe losses that this retirement was effected, and although our artillery did magnificent work in covering the retreat, the superiority of the Boer guns was painfully evident. It is more than possible that a disaster might have happened at this period of the battle, for Grimwood's men were very much shaken, and were beginning to show symptoms of panic. Suddenly, however, help came from a most unexpected quarter. A hoarse cheer resounded above the din of battle, and a crowd of jovial bluejackets came tumbling out of a train that had puffed up to Ladysmith from the coast. With a

'Yeo-ho!' and a 'Heave-ho!' they hauled out some long ship's guns, and with quick, strong arms mounted them on the strangest-looking gun-carriages. In a very short time the long snouts of these new weapons were craning upwards at a high angle, and crash after crash startled the Boers and British, while great shells went tumbling on to Pepworth Hill. Captain Hedworth Lambton with his 'handy men' had arrived in the nick of time, and with Captain Percy Scott—who had designed the rough carriages for mounting the guns—had done a glorious service for the Empire. The Boer guns were soon silenced, and the retreat of the British divisions was accomplished without further damage.

Unfortunately, however, the left wing of the army perched up at Nicholson's Nek was unable to take part in the retirement, and it is now necessary to chronicle the fate of Colonel Carleton's force in that direction. They had set out the night before with high hopes and exultation at the very danger of their enterprise. It was pitch-dark, and the road was rough, but for hours they tramped along, and both Colonel Carleton and Major Adye were rejoiced when, in the dim light of the early morning, they found themselves within 200 yards of the ridge. At this moment, however, when a halt was called, an irretrievable disaster took place. Frightened by some rocks that came rolling down from the cliffs above, the mules of the mountain battery suddenly stampeded. Bucking and screaming with terror, they broke loose from the men who held them, and swept at a mad gallop through the panic-stricken soldiers, knocking them over, trampling them senseless, and flying helter-skelter in every direction. When the tornado had passed and the bruised men had picked themselves up, the extent of the tragedy was at once realized. With those abominable mules had gone sections of guns, cartridges, and shells.

It would have been the best thing for the officers to have taken their men back without delay, but neither British officers nor British soldiers like turning back when they have been

told off for a dangerous job. They went on, and in the early morning found themselves on the heel of a ridge shaped somewhat like the sole of a boot. They were in a tight corner, for the tumult of the stampede had aroused the attention of the Boers, and parties of the enemy came hurriedly across the hills to this isolated spur. Christian De Wet was among them, and led the advance with that consummate 'slimness' for which he was afterwards renowned. Our soldiers tried not to waste their ammunition, for they had very little to spare, on account of those 'accursed mules,' as they called them, but it was rarely enough they saw anyone to fire at. The Boers crept forward closer and closer to the sole of that rocky boot, covering themselves from boulder to boulder, from which, as they advanced, they shot with deadly effect into the huddled mass of British troops in the 'heel' beyond.

All through that day our men could see the battle raging below them, their hearts sinking as they saw our shells fall short, and despairing still more when they saw the retirement of Grimwood's division. Colonel Carleton knew then that he had been left to his fate. Retreat was impossible now, as it would mean absolute destruction. What was to be done? The men were firing their last cartridges, and firing them in vain, for the Boers were still hidden. Many of the Fusiliers who had marched with Yule from Glencoe were sleeping through sheer exhaustion. The inevitable happened: a white flag fluttered over the ridge. No one quite knows who raised it, and there were many who would have disputed it, and fought on till they died. But as the pitiful white signal went up, the Boers left their cover for the first time, and swarmed towards the British troops. Some of our men below the line of the ridge went on firing, still ignorant of the surrender. They were instantly ordered to desist. Treachery, at least, should not be imputed to them. Then a tragic scene took place. The officers broke their swords with white faces and curses on their lips. Private soldiers threw themselves on the ground and sobbed as if their hearts would break.

The Boers behaved with admirable restraint and kindness. They showed no sign of triumph, and did their utmost to relieve the sufferings of the wounded as well as the humiliation of the prisoners. As the day wore off they sat round singing hymns with deep reverence and feeling. Then those brown-bearded farmers, so curiously like the old Puritans of New England in their piety and courage, asked their prisoners to form into ranks, and, marching with them into the Transvaal, sent them on by train to Pretoria.

CHAPTER LXVII

DISASTERS AND DEFEATS

THIS disaster to nearly 1,000 men came as a heavy blow to the British people at home and in the colonies. It was a rude awakening from the dream of a triumphant 'march to Pretoria,' when our men should sweep the Boers like rabble from their path. Of course, there was no panic and no reason for panic. A thousand men captured is a nasty thing, but Sir George White, who, as already said, was quick to take the whole responsibility of this disaster, had fallen back in perfect order with his army, and was prepared to hold Ladysmith against all odds. Meanwhile the First Army Corps, with Sir Redvers Buller, were already arriving in South Africa, and the whole nation looked with confidence to the calm, stern warrior who was now to be in chief command.

Buller himself was not pleased with the situation he found on his arrival. He had hoped to make the Tugela River the first line of defence against the invasion of Natal, and to keep his Army Corps intact for great strategical movements on a large scale. But he found himself not only without the aid of Sir George White's forces, but called to the relief of Ladysmith, which was now closely besieged. Two other towns also called for help.

Kimberley, the diamond city, defended by a small garrison under Colonel Kekewich, was already invested. Cecil Rhodes had thrown himself into the place by the last train that could get through the Boer lines, and the enemy were eager to capture the mines and the one man they hated most in South Africa. To the far north of Cape Colony, on the western frontier of the Transvaal, Major Baden-Powell with a miscellaneous force of Border Police and volunteers held Mafeking as a point of vantage, and he also was hard pressed by the enemy, under Cronje at first and then under Snyman, who sat round to starve him out. General Buller's own plan of campaign had been altered by the new circumstances that had arisen since his departure from England.

To save the prestige of the Empire, it seemed necessary to secure the safety of the three besieged towns. It meant the breaking up of the Army Corps. As soon as its sections arrived at Table Bay, in a constant procession of great transports, some were hurried off to the Orange River, under Lord Methuen, for the relief of Kimberley, General Gatacre and others were detailed for the defence of Cape Colony against an invasion from the Orange Free State, and Buller himself, going round by Durban, advanced to Willow Grange on the road to Ladysmith.

General Methuen was the first to come in touch with the enemy in the new chapter of the war. Two ranges of hills lay between him and Kimberley, and the ridges were lined with Boer sharpshooters, whose rifles commanded the plains below. Trenches seamed the hillsides in all directions, and in them, perfectly concealed, lay the rough, uncouth men in farmers' garb, who, though they knew but little of soldiering from a European point of view, had been crack shots from earliest boyhood. Their grim old General, Cronje, had posted his artillery behind the kopjes where it would be difficult for our guns to reach them, and under their muzzles there were more deep trenches carefully concealed by the low, blue bush of the veldt. As yet Lord Methuen knew not the task that

lay in front of him before he could cover the sixty miles to Kimberley. After preliminary reconnaissances beyond the Orange River by the Lancers and Mounted Infantry, in which many of our most promising officers were picked off by the Boer sharpshooters, the first battle was fought at Belmont. It was 'a soldier's battle,' in which generalship and strategy counted for nothing, and the Coldstreams, Grenadiers, Scots Guards, and Northumberland's fought their way grimly and doggedly up those trench-seamed ridges in the storm of a murderous fire, never stopping, though comrades fell at every step, and gaining the summit with a grand rush, though the Boer riflemen held their ground, and snapped their triggers in the very faces of the foremost men. We captured fifty men—poor takings for a victory that cost us fifty dead and 200 wounded. The rest of the enemy galloped off on their ponies, and were unpursued owing to Lord Methuen's want of horsemen. One ridge had been gained, and we were a little nearer Kimberley, but the Boers had fallen back to a second ridge no less formidable, and the same hard fighting had to be done again on the following day. The guns of the Naval Brigade were now brought into action, and to the sailors and Marines were the first honours of the assault. The brown-bearded sailors—200 'handy men'—with a great sea-cheer bounded up the slopes, and disappeared from view in a cloud of sand, raised by the pelting bullets of the enemy.

Ethelston, of the *Powerful*, was struck down. Officers and men dropped on all sides, and when the Naval Brigade got to the crest of that deadly hill nearly half their number lay on the slopes below. The Northamptons followed the sailormen, the Northumberland's, Lancashires, and Yorkshires vying with each other in individual gallantry. Even the non-combatants, pressmen and parsons, were not behindhand. Mr. E. F. Knight, the famous war-correspondent, had his right arm shot off. To the chaplain of the Northamptons, named Hill, who was ministering to the wounded men where the bullets fell thickest, an officer cried out, 'Come back, sir.

You've no right to risk your life in that way!' 'This is my place,' said the chaplain coolly, 'and I am doing my own special work.'

Again, at the battle, we won the day, but again, though the ridge was ours, the Boers got away to fight us on another day. The small number of cavalry under Methuen's command were wholly insufficient to pursue the enemy without desperate risk, and in England, when the barren results of the victory were made known, there were strong words against the War Office for failing to provide more mounted men.

It was; however, with grateful hearts that Lord Methuen's men left the ridges behind them and moved across an open plain towards the Modder River, on the way to Kimberley. They thought their way was easy now, for a Boer without a hill was not worth troubling about. So they thought then. Alas! it was not long before they had a rude awakening.

Cronje had made the Modder River his next line of defence, and on both sides of the stream he had dug fresh rifle-pits, in which his men lay as snugly as behind the kopjes, while a maze of wire entanglement covered the ground near the farmhouse which he used as his headquarters. To the advancing British army the smiling, sunny plain seemed a peaceful solitude. Not a Boer was to be seen, and with high hearts our soldiers prepared to ford the river. As they came nearer, however, the silence was broken by volleys of rifle-shots, and that 'peaceful plain' was swept with a sheet of lead. Then it was found that Lord Methuen was mistaken in thinking that the Modder was fordable at every point. Many men were drowned as they plunged into the water, and for a long time no ford could be found. Meanwhile the infantry, who had been allowed to get within 700 yards of the Boer trenches, were exposed to a pitiless fire.

They could not advance; they would not retire. Unable to cross the river, the cavalry were useless. It was to the guns that they must look for relief, and the guns came gallantly to their rescue. A long artillery duel took place, and the air

resounded for hours with the crash of shell answering shell. The Boer riflemen picked off the gunners, shot down the horses, and concentrated their fire on the officers. There was no life for man or beast, and the batteries were forced to get further back to a much longer range. Nevertheless, our shells were beginning to play havoc in the Boer trenches, and later in the day Colonel Codrington, of the Coldstreams, and Major Coleridge, of the North Lancashires, found a ford, and, crossing the stream, established a strong position on the right flank of the enemy.

The battle went on till the darkness of night hid foe from friend, and when the morning came Cronje's army had disappeared, the trenches were empty, the farmhouse deserted. The Boers had fallen back once more to another line of hills. Here they were strongly reinforced, and Methuen's task had to be done all over again before the road lay clear to Kimberley.

Methuen himself now received some welcome reinforcements. Canada and Australia had sent contingents of loyalists to the help of the mother-country. Our colonies were beginning to respond to the call of kinship. In those days of danger they were not going to look on idly while the nations mocked at us, and men of the old race gave their blood for the cause of Empire. Thus the Australians had cried to England in the words of one of their own poets :

' Are we only an English market
Held dear for the sake of trade ?
Or are we a part of the Empire,
Close welded by hilt and blade ?
If we are to cleave together
As mother and son through life,
Give us our share of the burden ;
Let us stand with you in the strife.
A nation is never a nation
Worthy of pride or place
Till the mothers have sent their firstborn
To look death on the field in the face.

Australia is calling to England—
Let England answer the call;
There are smiles for those who come back to us,
And tears for those who may fall.
Bridle to bridle our sons will ride,
With the best that Britain has bred;
All we ask is an open field,
And a soldier's grave for our dead.*

Australia, and Canada, too, were calling to England, offering their strong sons to cement the bonds of Empire with their blood, and England had answered the call, proud of the loyalty of her children. And so they had come, these men of the Bush and the Backwoods, who could ride hard and shoot straight, and beat the Boers at their own game—better men for this kind of warfare than the soldiers drilled at Aldershot, though not more brave.

To Methuen also at this time came the Highland Brigade—the very flower of Scotland's manhood—the Black Watch, the Seaforths, the Argylls and Sutherlands, and the Highland Light Infantry, under their well-beloved chief, the good and gallant General Wauchope, whom they would follow to the death.

It was a brave, strong army that was now gathered under Lord Methuen, one of the finest armies ever led by a British General in the field, and to the people of the Empire there seemed no cause why such a force should not advance triumphantly to its goal. Yet on the circle of hills which still had to be passed the Boers, with their deadly modern weapons, which make the defence ten times easier than the attack, were a formidable enemy not to be reckoned with too lightly. Methuen advanced, and on the night of December 10 the Highland Brigade, 4,000 men strong, was sent forward to gain a position on the flank of the enemy. Owing to the darkness they marched in close formation, General Wauchope leading

* Written by Mr. A. G. Hales, correspondent to the *Daily News* during the South African War.

the way with a guide, who was supposed to know the country blindfold. The men were silent, the officers gave their orders in whispers. No sound was heard save the dull tramp of the Highlanders and the swish of their kilts through the veldt grass.

So they went on till three in the morning. Suddenly a soldier tripped over a hidden wire, and set a tin-can tinkling. In an instant a rifle-shot rang out with a startling report, and Boer searchlights swept upon the Highland Brigade, revealing every line of their faces, as though the noonday sun were full upon them. Then, before they had time to get into open order, a storm of bullets from trenches no further than fifty yards away poured into the huddled ranks. This crash of 1,000 rifles swept down the Highlanders like trees in a tempest. They fell in heaps of dead and dying, their cries of agony rising in a great wail above the din of the enemy's fire. General Wauchope was brought to his knees riddled with bullets. 'What a pity!' he said in a dazed way, and fell forward in death. The Seaforths and Black Watch rushed forward with hoarse shouts of rage, but they were caught in the wire tangles, and strung up like trapped wolves. Still the Boers poured in their volleys, and the ground of Magersfontein, as that place of death was called, became an awful shambles, too horrible to describe.

Seven hundred men were struck down in a few minutes, including fifty-seven officers, the best and bravest of Scotland. In the darkness the surviving officers called to their companies, and with superb discipline and courage those sturdy Highlanders restored their shattered ranks, and formed up for an orderly retirement. As the day broke Methuen sent the Gordons to cover the retreat of their comrades, and with wild shouts for revenge they dashed at the Boer trenches. Then the Guards and other regiments stormed at the heights on every side, but after many hours of fighting, the only success on our side was the withdrawal of the Highland Brigade from their still perilous position. That night Lord Methuen with a

heavy heart fell back out of range of the Boer guns, and on the following day England, and the world, heard that our army had retreated to the Modder River, with the loss of 1,000 men. Scotland was in mourning for her sons, and throughout the Empire there was such grief as had never been known since the dark days of the Indian Mutiny. A few days before this a disaster had taken place in another part of South Africa.

At Sterkstroom, in the northern part of Cape Colony, a division had been assembled to hold back the Boer invasion from the Orange Free State. This was under General Gatacre — 'General Back-acher,' as he was called by his men, on account of his restless energy and the heavy demands he made upon their endurance. He had done gallant work in our little wars with savage tribes, but that kind of warfare is not the best training for such an enemy as now faced him on a line of hills at Stormberg. His division had been sadly broken up by demands for reinforcements from Methuen on the one side and Buller on the other, so that he had not much more than a brigade under his command. With this, however, he set off to attack the Boers on the heights. It was to be a surprise march, but there is no doubt that the Boers knew Gatacre's plans as well as he did. In the darkness of a December night the rash but gallant General led his men forward, walking in front with the bridle of his horse over his arm, and with two guides by his side to show the way.

It seems probable that these guides were traitors. Be that as it may, however, the column lost its way, and when the light of early morning came found themselves blocked by a high ridge looking into the barrels of the enemy's weapons. Our soldiers were as closely packed as the Highlanders had been, and when the enemy opened fire they might have been massacred in the same way if it had not been that the men opposed to them were mostly Colonial rebels without the grit of the Boer commandos. Gatacre ordered his men to storm the hill, but it rose sheer above them in great ledges of rock that were

absolutely impregnable. Worse still, the soldiers were worn out with fatigue after their long night's march, and many actually tumbled off to sleep whenever they could find cover. We did not lose many men—only twenty-six killed and sixty-eight wounded—but 600 men were taken prisoners and two guns captured before Gatacre retreated in despair.

Cape Colony was never in such danger as now, but fortunately the Free State was slow in moving, and Gatacre was able to hold his ground without any attack in force upon his position.

CHAPTER LXVIII

ALONG THE TUGELA

MEANWHILE Sir Redvers Buller, the Commander-in-Chief, had assembled a strong force of his dismembered Army Corps at a place called Frere, in Natal. Between that small town and Ladysmith was a great amphitheatre of hills, rising 1,000 to 3,000 feet in an undulating series of kopjes 'like the waves of a choppy sea.' These were held by Boer commandos under the enemy's boldest and most skilful General, Botha, who had not only posted his men along the rocky ledges which formed a natural fortress, but had dug trenches down to the bank of the Tugela River, which ran in a series of loops and curves along the front of his position, and placed a strong body of sharpshooters in these rifle-pits. After several reconnaissances, which failed to draw the enemy's fire, and therefore gave no information of their position and strength, General Buller decided to go straight for the heart of the position across the Tugela, to what were known as the Colenso kopjes. It was a bold policy, but frightfully dangerous in view of our disasters at the Modder River and Stormberg. On December 15 the battle opened at half-past five in the morning, and began with a terrible blunder on our part.

Colonel Long, who commanded the artillery, was anxious to

get within close range of the enemy's position, and with extreme rashness took his batteries at a rapid pace within 700 yards of the river, more than a mile in front of the infantry under General Hildyard, whose advance he had been ordered to cover. Unlimbering, twelve guns were drawn up in line, making splendid targets for the sharpshooters in the trenches beyond. Before our gunners could fire a shell a thousand rifles rang out, and six officers were immediately struck down, two being killed on the spot, while horses and men were going down every minute. Nevertheless the guns were served as steadily as though at practice, and for fifteen minutes they did such good work that the enemy's fire was considerably beaten down. The Boers, however, now brought some shells to bear on the English guns, and the position rapidly became unbearable. Colonel Long himself was struck by a shrapnel bullet and seriously injured. Still the men worked the guns, until by seven o'clock their ammunition was quite spent. Then it was decided to leave the guns until more ammunition was sent up by Buller, to whom Captain Herbert galloped with the news, and to seek shelter in a little donga, or ditch, which by good luck lay just behind their position. To this place of retreat Colonel Long and the wounded men were dragged by their comrades, and here the little party waited miserably for help that was not soon in coming.

While this unhappy incident had been taking place, the battle was going badly for General Buller elsewhere. General Hart, with the Irish Brigade—a fiery General, leading impetuous men—had blundered into a very tight corner in one of the river loops, where they were exposed to a merciless cross-fire. The anxiety for this division had attracted Sir Redvers Buller's attention from General Hildyard's troops, who had made a gallant and successful advance upon the village of Colenso, which they eventually occupied. But Captain Herbert now reached the Commander-in-Chief with the news of the mishap to Colonel Long and his guns. General Buller, in the greatest dismay, galloped off to the donga where the

wounded men were huddled, and at the sight of the deserted guns sent for volunteers to drag them beyond the Boer rifle range. Captain Schofield, Captain Congreve, Lieutenant Roberts (the only son of Lord Roberts), and Corporal Nurse immediately offered to go out and limber up the guns and bring them back. It was a perilous task, and a gallant attempt. Congreve was splashed with bullets, which went through his clothes; his horse was killed, and he was then hit in the leg. Poor young Roberts was mortally wounded, and lay out in the open, unable to move. Captain Schofield and Corporal Nurse succeeded in reaching the guns, and rode back with two of them. Then an officer named Captain Reed rode out with three teams of horses and thirteen men, but the fire was too hot for them. Before he could reach the guns thirteen horses were killed out of the twenty-two, and seven of his men fell. Then he was wounded in the leg, and had to crawl back to the donga. Meanwhile Captain Congreve, in spite of his wound, had managed to get to young Roberts, and dragged him off also to the donga, which was now crowded with men. Even this was not a safe shelter, for Captain Hughes was killed as he stood by General Buller, and the Commander-in-Chief was severely bruised by a fragment of a spent shell.

The strain of this situation was telling severely on Sir Redvers Buller, and he now decided to abandon the guns, and order the retirement of General Hildyard's Brigade from Colenso. Both of these decisions have been strongly criticised, and it is generally admitted that the abandonment of the guns was one of the most lamentable episodes in the history of the British army.

But worse was to follow. This first attempt to relieve Ladysmith had failed disastrously, but General Buller still had a magnificent army, and there was no reason for despair. The Commander-in-Chief, however, terribly depressed by his defeat, appears to have lost his nerve altogether, and he came to the unhappy conclusion that Ladysmith must fall before it could be relieved.

Sir George White was in constant communication with the Commander-in-Chief by means of the heliograph, which flashed messages to and fro across the hills. He had urged a speedy relief, as he was hard pressed, and sickness was rife in the town, and Sir Redvers Buller had answered repeatedly, 'Be of good cheer; we are coming soon.' But now General Buller sent a telegram to the War Office in England, saying that the relief was impossible, and at the same time he flashed a message to Sir George White, suggesting that he should burn his ciphers, destroy his guns, fire away his ammunition, and make the best terms he could before surrendering.

Fortunately for the Empire, the man who kept guard over Ladysmith was not one to listen to counsels of surrender. As Nelson had once turned his blind eye to his telescope, and refused to see the signal ordering retirement, so Sir George White protested that the enemy must have tampered with his General's cipher, and that he could not believe the accuracy of this message. Even these words did not bring General Buller to his senses, and the message was repeated in modified terms. Then Sir George White replied sternly that he had not the slightest intention of surrendering, and urged General Buller to keep the enemy engaged. At the same time, he issued a proclamation in Ladysmith that the defence would be continued 'in the same spirited manner as it has hitherto been conducted, until the general officer commanding-in-chief in South Africa does relieve it.'

The Secretary of State for War and his colleagues at the War Office were astounded and alarmed beyond measure when they received the ominous telegram. It was just before Christmas, and most of the Ministers were out of town. But Lord Lansdowne at once sent a despatch to General Buller, ordering him to persevere until reinforcements could reach him, or to hand over his command to a subordinate and return home. A Cabinet Council was then called, and it was decided to send out Lord Roberts to take supreme command in South Africa,

with Lord Kitchener as his Chief of Staff, the two most trusted Generals of the Empire.

During that 'black week' of December the spirit of the nation was severely tried. The war had been one long record of disasters, and 'victories' that were half defeats. Never had the British Empire been in greater need of loyalty and courage. But never also did the Empire respond so nobly to the call to arms as in that week of gloom. There was no outward sign of despair, few cries of 'Stop the war,' no wavering or faint-heartedness. Men set their teeth grimly and held their heads high while our enemies in Europe howled with glee at our losses and defeats. From every part of the country—from the great cities and from the villages of rural England, from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, and every colony where the British flag waved there came offers of service. Our volunteer regiments were ready to a man to fight for their country in the hour of her need. Men of rank and wealth pleaded to go as private troopers, finding their own horses, clothes, everything. City men left their offices and crowded to the War Office to be taken on as Yeomanry. From the plough and the shop, from the factory and the desk, the manhood of the nation offered its blood to be poured out on the African veldt for the honour of the flag. The enemies who too soon and too foolishly had predicted the break-up of the Empire began to realize somewhat painfully what our Empire meant as a world force.

It is much to be thankful for that we had a Government in power wise enough not to discourage this enthusiasm of the nation and her colonies. To check it then would indeed have been to weaken the bonds of brotherhood. But the colonial offers were accepted. Yeomanry regiments were enrolled and equipped; even the volunteers were allowed a chance of proving their usefulness and valour. The militia were called out, and the army reserve summoned to active service. Roberts and Kitchener were to have the finest army that ever left these shores.

CHAPTER LXIX

THE RELIEF OF LADYSMITH

MEANWHILE Ladysmith, Mafeking, and Kimberley kept the flag flying in spite of short rations, Boer bullets, and enteric fever, which was a good deal worse than shot and shell. Sir George White was as determined as ever to hold out, convinced that, in the end, Sir Redvers Buller would find a way through, and he kept the hearts of his men up by an occasional sally at the enemy outside. Now and again, too, the monotony of the siege was broken by a bold attempt of the Boers to rush the defences. At Waggon Hill—a ridge held by the Manchesters and 60th Rifles—the enemy crept one night within 800 yards of our men and kept the hill lively with a brisk fire all the next day. But the two regiments held to their ground gallantly until at last the enemy were forced to beat a retreat with heavy loss. A splendid little exploit was successfully accomplished when 600 colonial men, under General Hunter, paid a surprise visit in the darkness to a hill where the Boers' biggest gun was mounted. In stocking-feet they scaled the height, and when a sentry challenged in Dutch, he was answered back in his own tongue. Then with a rush and a cheer and a fierce crack of rifles the men leapt at the long muzzle of the monster gun, wrapped it round with gun-cotton, and fired the charge, while the Boers were kept at bay. There was a tremendous explosion, the iron tube reared up like a wounded beast and toppled backwards into the pit below. Then, with the laughter of great school-boys, the colonials scampered off, and got back to quarters with only one man lost as the price of one of the neatest jobs of the war.

An exactly similar exploit was achieved three nights later, this time by the regulars, who envied the glory of their colonial brothers. This time the objective was a howitzer

on Surprise Hill, and though the explosion was a long time coming, owing to a defective fuse, and we lost, in consequence, eleven dead, forty-three wounded, and six prisoners, the deed was accomplished, and the price was not too heavy. These gallant adventures did much to put courage into the defenders of Ladysmith.

Once again the enemy made an attack upon Waggon Hill, and Cæsar's Camp, on the other end of the ridge, this time with practically the whole force of their investing army. General Ian Hamilton hurried up some companies of Gordons and Imperial Light Horse, and the 53rd Gun Battery. It was essential that this ridge should be held. If once the Boers could mount their guns on it, Ladysmith was doomed.

It was the hardest fight of the siege. The Boers fought with desperate, heroic valour, and swept the hill with a storm of rifle-fire. On some parts of the ridge our casualties were very heavy. Out of thirty-three Gordons under one lieutenant, thirty were severely wounded, and the Imperial Light Horse and Rifles lost many officers and men. For more than a day the battle continued, and then at last Ian Hamilton beat off the Boers, punishing them heavily in their final stampede, and Waggon Hill was still secure.

While Ladysmith was holding out in this plucky way, and the spirits of the long-suffering civilians rose and fell as the prospects of relief seemed near or far, Sir Redvers Buller had regained his old nerve and resolution, and hammered away at the hills which lay between his army and the besieged town. Then once more he ordered a general assault upon the enemy's position, and, by a clever piece of strategy, succeeded in getting a strong force across one of the drifts of the Tugela River, upon the enemy's right flank. General Hart's Irish Brigade had to bear the brunt of the battle when this movement was made, and, in spite of heavy losses, accomplished their appointed task with heroic valour. In the centre of this position, on the Boer right, rose a tall, jagged hill, called Spion Kop, because from this eminence the Boers of the first trek

had gazed down on the promised land of Natal. To Sir Redvers Buller, gazing at it through his glass, it seemed as if this were the key to the enemy's position, and that if once we could get hold of it, the Boer camp would be commanded on all sides. It was a risky thing to attack it, strongly held as it was by riflemen, but to Buller and his officers it seemed worth the venture.

General Woodgate, with some Lancashire regiments, and Colonel Thorneycroft, with 180 men from his own corps of Thorneycroft's Horse, had the honour of leading this 'forlorn hope.' In the dead of night they clambered in single file for 2,000 feet up the narrow, winding path, and it was not until they had almost gained the crest that the raucous shout of a Boer sentry raised the alarm. Then, with a hearty Lancashire cheer and a clatter of bayonets, our men rushed the hill, and shouted with glee as the Boers scattered down the other side in breathless panic.

Spion Kop was ours, or part of it, for it was but the sharp end of a ridge, the other side of which was held by lines of Boer sharpshooters. Unfortunately on other heights in its neighbourhood the enemy had posted a number of Maxim guns, and when the dawn came Spion Kop was swept with a hurricane of shells and bullets. General Woodgate dropped among the first of our casualties, Colonel Thorneycroft succeeding to his command. The Lancashire men and Thorneycroft's blazed away for hours at an invisible foe, and later in the day they were reinforced by another brigade. But this did not improve the position, for the summit of Spion Kop was too confined an area for so many men, and they were huddled together so closely that the enemy's shot and shell did awful damage to them. Exposed to the burning sun, without the least shelter, parched with thirst, and with only a few biscuits apiece to stave off the pangs of hunger, the men stuck firmly to the hill, firing over the dead bodies of their comrades, wounded, some of them in half a dozen places, yet still shooting till they swooned or died.

'One old colonial,' wrote a surgeon of the Army Medical Corps, 'in Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry, with a gray beard, walked down, leaning on his rifle. He was a mass of wounds—one ear cut through by a bullet; his chin, neck, and chest also shot right through by others, and his back and legs torn by shell. He came in and said that he had just dropped in to let me take his finger off, as it was so shattered he could not pull the trigger of his rifle, getting in the way of his next finger, which he could use. He wanted to get back up the hill, to pay the Dutchmen out.'

Towards the end of the day some Boers managed to get close to the British position, and called out to the soldiers to surrender.

'Then,' wrote a Transvaal burgher, who was present at the time, 'a great, big, angry, red-faced soldier ran out of the trench on our right, and screamed out: "I'm commandant here. Take your men back to h—l, sir; there's no surrender!"'

That big, angry, red-faced soldier was Colonel Thorneycroft himself.

At last, however, the position became absolutely unbearable. The dead were crowded among the living, and the wounded were dying as they lay in helpless agony. It was mere folly to stay there to be shot at next day, and Colonel Thorneycroft cannot be blamed because, upon his own responsibility, he abandoned such a death-trap.

Not yet had we 'the key' to the enemy's stronghold. Having failed with Spion Kop, Sir Redvers Buller altered his plans, and this time was convinced that another hill named Vaalkrantz would at last give him that golden key he had so long sought in vain. Vaalkrantz was attacked, scaled, and captured, but it was a repetition of Spion Kop, and was also abandoned in its turn. To the inhabitants of Ladysmith, famished and disease-stricken, pressed hard by the enemy, and shelled by day and night, it really seemed as if the relief would never come. Three times now General Buller had

made desperate attempts to break through the chain of hills, and three times he had failed. There was only one thing else—to try the enemy's left flank. As it happened, the left flank of the Boers was their weakest side, especially now that some thousands of Free State men had been drawn off to defend their colony from the advance of Lord Roberts, who was pressing forward with a new army.

Leaving an adequate force to guard the western end of his position, General Buller sent Lord Dundonald's cavalry in a wide sweep to the east, followed by General Hildyard's English Brigade, and General Hart's Irish Brigade. Then a series of battles were fought day after day for a whole week, the Boers stubbornly contesting their rocky ridges, and inflicting tremendous losses upon our troops, but beaten back from Hussar Hill, from Hlangwana Hill, from Green Hill, from Monte Christo, from Cingolo Ridge, from Railway Hill and Pieter's Hill, and lastly, from Bulwana Hill, where for many long months a great gun had lain, throwing huge shells into Ladysmith town.

Not a regiment in that relieving army but had earned undying glory, and fought with desperate courage. Now it was the Lancashire men who stormed a rocky height under pelting bullets, now it was the Dorsets, Middlesex, and Somersets who bore the heat of the day. Now the Surreys, Devons, and Yorkshires led the rushes from trench to trench, where the Boer marksmen waited in their rifle-pits until the glint of British bayonets was in their eyes.

But always Hart's Irishmen were in the thickest of the fight, following their General, who seemed to bear a charmed life, exposing himself recklessly to the hottest fire, and eager for his men to be where the danger was greatest. He showed them no mercy, and they asked for none, proud and exultant at the honour they were buying with their lives. So at last, after so many months of slogging battles, advances, and retreats, high hopes and gloomy disappointments, the way was clear, and on February 27, 1900, Lord Dundonald, with

a squadron of Imperial Light Horse and Natal Carabineers, rode as twilight fell straight for Ladysmith. The town was reached before dark, and at the sight of those dust-covered horsemen appearing between the hills, the brave garrison felt their hearts throb with a joy that was almost pain.

‘I was alongside of Lord Dundonald as he entered the town,’ wrote a trooper of the Natal Carabineers, ‘and to see thousands of poor, starved-looking men actually crying for joy was enough to make one’s heart bleed.’ Sir George White rode down to greet his rescuers, and as the two men clasped hands over their horses’ necks their silence was more eloquent than words. For 118 days Ladysmith had endured the horrors of the siege, and the sick and wounded outnumbered those who could still hold a rifle. Their strength was well-nigh spent, their ammunition almost gone, their food fast giving out. None too soon was it that relief had come. But though their sufferings had been great, and their losses heavy, the relieving army had endured as much. Twenty per cent. of that great army had fallen on the way, for the price of redeeming Ladysmith had been no less than 5,000 killed and wounded. Yet all was well! The flag was still flying over Ladysmith town, and the Empire was rejoicing. The dark days were over at last, and we were beginning to see the light.

CHAPTER LXX

ROBERTS TO THE RESCUE

WITH the coming of Roberts and Kitchener a new era of the war began. Not in vain had the nation put its confidence in ‘Bobs’—the grizzled, blue-eyed little man whose record reached back to the Indian Mutiny, whose march to Kandahar was one of the heroic episodes of history, who was the idol of every ‘Tommy’ in the army. Now that Ladysmith was relieved Lord Roberts had two aims in mind, for which he

prepared with a swiftness and secrecy which insured their success. The first was to send a powerful body of cavalry and mounted infantry to raise the siege of Kimberley, the second to march upon Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State, and thence to Johannesburg and Pretoria, thus driving a wedge between the armies of Cronje and Botha. The first of these two schemes was entrusted to General French, whose reputation as a dashing cavalry leader was secure after Elandslaagte and other engagements. While Lord Methuen still held the Boers on the defensive at Modder River, French, with a magnificent army of mounted men, swept in a wide curve across Cape Colony, over the Riet and the Modder Rivers, and then, while Methuen pounded Cronje's front, and Hector Macdonald's Highland Brigade attacked his extreme right with a fierceness and gallantry that had never been surpassed in this war, the long lines of Lancers, Hussars, Dragoons, and mounted infantry streamed straight for Kimberley.

To the watchers at Kimberley the moving clouds of dust approaching them across the red plain caused a sudden fear that Cronje had left the Modder and Methuen, and was bringing his army for a great assault upon their long-besieged town. But presently the Boers who had surrounded Kimberley for many months showed signs of panic, and, leaving their entrenchments, moved off in a hurry as the dust came closer. Then a little while later all doubts were at an end, and General French with his staff rode into the rescued city.

The siege had lasted from the end of October, 1899, to the middle of February, 1900. Although a dreary time and a hungry one—for rations had soon run short—there were none of those stirring episodes which made the siege of Ladysmith so exciting and perilous. The Boers hurled shells into the place from an enormous gun four miles from the town, but Cecil Rhodes, who had come into the Diamond City by the last train through, opened the mines to the inhabitants, and perfect shelter was obtained in the underground galleries. The chief excitement of the siege was the building of 'Long Cecil,'

a home-made gun manufactured under the direction of an American named Labram. The Boers had a real surprise when this new-born monster hurled its first 28-pound shell, inscribed 'With Mr. Cecil Rhodes' Compliments,' and for a long time they were immensely puzzled as to its meaning. By the irony of fate Labram himself was one of the few men to be killed by a shell, and, stranger still, the Boer who had been responsible for bringing up the enemy's big gun was shot soon afterwards by a long-range rifle-shot from the city.

It is a painful matter to relate that between Cecil Rhodes and Colonel Kekewich, who commanded the garrison, there were very strained relations throughout the siege. Rhodes was a man who could never play a subordinate part with any pleasure, and he showed a want of good sense and good feeling by criticising and thwarting the actions of the military. His impatience at the long duration of the siege, and the inability of Lord Methuen to bring relief, led to his sending an injudicious message to the Commander-in-Chief. Unfortunately that message was somewhat twisted on its way, and Lord Roberts found himself obliged to send Cecil Rhodes a severe reprimand. Altogether it was an unpleasant episode, and there is no doubt that Colonel Kekewich would have had an easier task if the city had not contained the 'Empire-builder.'

Cheered by the good news of the relief, Lord Roberts now commenced the great campaign which, in a few weeks, was to change the whole aspect of the war, and insure the ultimate supremacy of the British in South Africa. Swiftly and steadily, his army of infantry had followed in the wake of French's cavalry, arriving at the Modder only a day behind the mounted men. Our army extended along a front of forty miles, and now its separate divisions crossed over the drifts, cutting Cronje's lines of communication with Bloemfontein, and gradually closing him in. The old war-wolf, finding himself in danger of being cornered, abandoned his position and made a desperate endeavour to break through the surrounding forces.

But General French, with untiring energy, left Kimberley within a few hours of its relief, and with a picked body of horsemen, some 2,000 strong, headed off Cronje's retreat, while the Highland Brigade pressed upon the Boer flanks, and Smith Dorrien's Brigade, Chelmsford's Brigade, Knox's Brigade, and Stephenson's Brigade, hurled themselves at Cronje's rear-guard. It was not without serious losses in officers and men that they gave chase to the 'wild boar.' Cronje's rear-guard battles during those exciting days were desperate and heroic. He gave ground only after fierce resistance, and his riflemen covered his retreat by holding ridge after ridge against the pursuing army. At last, however, double as he might, there was no way through for the grim old Boer and his fighting farmers, and when he saw that the sweeping circle of Lord Roberts' great army had closed every ford and pass, he 'went to earth,' as hunters say, at Paardeberg, on the Modder.

Furiously his men laboured with pick and spade to dig new trenches and burrows along the line of the river-front, and so quickly and thoroughly did they do their work that when Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener came up with part of the pursuing army, they found there was still some hard fighting in view before this stubborn enemy could be routed out. It is the opinion of most military critics that the wisest plan would have been to sit down round the Boer entrenchments—well out of range of rifle-fire—until the enemy were starved out. But Lord Roberts is hardly to be blamed for wishing to finish the job more quickly. Unfortunately, the old frontal attacks, which had caused us such terrible loss of life earlier in the war, were again repeated, and in the endeavour to rush the Boer lines we had 1,100 casualties.

Once again it was proved at Paardeberg how infinitely stronger is the defence than the attack in modern warfare with the long-range rifle. Chastened by these losses, Lord Roberts adopted more cautious tactics, and at each end of the Boer lines two brigades began to work closer to the enemy by

digging trenches nearer and ever nearer to the Boers' own rifle-pits. Even now, however, when the end was in sight, impatience and rashness caused a repetition, on a smaller scale, of the Magersfontein disaster. The Canadians, who had been working at the trenches, stole out one night to get to close quarters with the enemy, hoping to surprise them and turn them out of their burrows at the bayonet-point. Silently and breathlessly they crept nearer, but then the same thing happened as at Magersfontein: a soldier tripped over a hidden wire, a tin can jangled, and in a moment a sheet of flame flashed along the Boer line. The Canadians hurled themselves to the ground, and most of the bullets whistled above them. But many good men and true lost their lives in that hurricane of rifle-fire before they could crawl back to their own entrenchments. Happily it was the last of those acts of heroic folly. At the other end of the Boer line the trenches had now been brought so near to the enemy's camp that their position was hopeless. Life was impossible for them under the storm of shot and shell that was now hurled upon them. Already, indeed, they were threatened with a more awful form of death, for the stench of the festering corpses and of the impurities of their camp, made the place a den of pestilence. For more than a week its horrors had been so great that desertions took place daily, and the less indomitable Boers slunk out towards the British lines to surrender themselves. At last Cronje himself—the stubborn and irreconcilable old warrior—was forced to own himself beaten, and sent word that he was willing to ask for terms. It was on the morning of the nineteenth anniversary of the disaster at Majuba Hill that General Cronje was conducted to the British camp, where Lord Roberts was waiting to receive him. A group of horsemen was seen approaching, and on the right of General Pretymann, who was conducting the Boer leader to the camp, rode an elderly man, in a loose green dust-coat, wide-brimmed hat, tweed trousers, and brown shoes. This was Cronje himself, whose stern,

impassive face, burnt almost black with long exposure to the sun, revealed no emotion of any kind.

'Commandant Cronje, sir,' said General Pretymen to Lord Roberts. Cronje touched his hat, and dismounted. Then Lord Roberts stepped briskly towards him, and took his hand in a warm grasp.

'You have made a gallant defence, sir,' he said, with charming courtesy. The Boer General was sullen and uncommunicative. He stipulated that his wife, who had shared the horrors of the last defence, should be allowed to accompany him, as well as his secretary and one or two personal attendants. Otherwise his surrender was unconditional. Lord Roberts willingly agreed to these requests, and then the Boers left their evil-smelling burrows, and came in to lay down their rifles. They were an extraordinary-looking set of men—with some women among them—and as they came forward carrying umbrellas, kettles, cooking-stoves, and all sorts of domestic articles, to the smart British soldiers it seemed impossible that this crowd of shabby, black-garbed people, looking for all the world like city tramps, could have been the same men who had fought so many desperate battles. But it is not the uniform that makes the soldier, and those prisoners of Paardeberg had shown a heroism not often equalled in the annals of war.

CHAPTER LXXI

THE HEROES OF MAFEKING

SOME mention must now be made of the little town of Mafeking, far away in the north, which all this time had been gallantly holding out against a Boer army of some 4,000 men. Its garrison was only about 700 all told—a strangely-assorted body of mounted police, colonial volunteers, gentlemen adventurers, shopkeepers, and their wives and children. But at the head of this little garrison was a man who was prepared to

hold the town against twice 4,000 men if need be, and whose enthusiasm and pluck was so great that he inspired everyone under his command with an heroic and dare-devil spirit that faced all odds cheerfully.

Major R. S. S. Baden-Powell was a man who appealed to the imagination and good-humour of the British race. A first-rate fighting man, a keen hunter, and a crack shot, he could also 'bring the house down' with a comic song, a whimsical recitation, a pianoforte sketch, or a skirt-dance. He could draw the most delightful caricatures—left hand or right, it made no difference to him—and he had an irrepressible gaiety of spirits and a schoolboy love of fun that enlivened any situation in which he happened to be present. Many were the jokes that he fired off at the Boers in between the good, straight shots which he also sent them.

When Cronje, who first superintended the siege, demanded the surrender of the town 'to avoid further bloodshed,' Baden-Powell jauntily replied, 'When is the bloodshed going to begin?' When Commandant Snyman, who succeeded Cronje, had been sending shells into the town for weeks, without doing much damage, Baden-Powell sent a message to say that 'if that sort of thing continued much longer, he must consider it a declaration of war.'

While never relaxing his hawk-like vigilance over the enemy's actions, he kept up the hearts of the garrison by arranging cricket and football matches, billiard tournaments, and smoking concerts, edited and illustrated a comic paper, arranged horse-flesh banquets with elaborate menus, and generally contrived to screw a joke out of the most annoying circumstances that arose. Now and again he was a little too daring, and from the sallies that he allowed occasionally, to make things lively for the Boers, many brave men never came back. But always he kept the flag flying, and several desperate attacks upon his trenches were repulsed with splendid valour and admirable generalship.

Once a party of Boers, under Commandant Eloff, actually

got into the town and held one of the buildings, but they were captured, and then—to their own surprise—Baden-Powell gave them a genial invitation to a garrison dinner, where they were treated to the good things that could still be scraped up. For six months Mafeking endured the siege, and the hopes and unbounded admiration of the whole Empire were centred upon that isolated town with its cheery officer in command. At last a force of mounted men, under Colonel Plumer, which had been gradually working its way northwards, came in touch with the Boer army, and with the aid of a sally, led by Baden-Powell himself, tumbled them out of their trenches in hot retreat. The news of Mafeking's relief was hailed throughout the mother-country and her colonies with an enthusiasm that was almost excessive in its outburst. It must, indeed, be admitted that many ordinarily respectable citizens lost their heads and did foolish things on 'Mafeking Day.' But this universal emotion was a proof of how deeply the public imagination had been stirred by the heroism of Baden-Powell and his men.

CHAPTER LXXII

HOW ROBERTS REACHED PRETORIA

MEANWHILE Lord Roberts was quick to follow up his success at Paardeberg, and once again his great army moved swiftly onwards to the heart of the Orange Free State. The Boers had been gathering to oppose his passage, and, under General De Wet, they proved seriously troublesome at a place called Poplar Grove, on the Modder River, which they had entrenched after the manner of Magersfontein. But we had had enough of Magersfonteins, and this time there was no deadly frontal attack, but Lord Roberts' army swept round the Boer flanks and almost enveloped their position. De Wet, however, was more wily than Cronje himself, and, with guns and waggons,

made a mad stampede through the only loophole, getting clear away.

But the country was now fairly free for Lord Roberts, and his army swept onwards for forty miles, avoiding the carefully prepared trenches of Boer marksmen on the way, and going round by the open plain, where no opposition was met with. So after one of the most splendid marches in the history of the army Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State, was reached in triumph.

President Steyn had fled with a scanty following, and the Mayor of the town surrendered it formally to the British. Already many of the inhabitants had hoisted the Union Jack above their houses, and when Lord Roberts raised his own flag above the market-place it was a symbol that the Orange Free State had disappeared into the historical past, and that the Orange River Colony had taken its place on the map of the British Empire.

For six weeks Lord Roberts stayed with his army at Bloemfontein, waiting for fresh horses to replace those which had dropped dead on the way, waiting also for those enormous supplies which are necessary for the feeding of so many thousands of soldiers. During that period of waiting enteric was rife in the town, and, owing to the bad drinking water, poisoned by floating corpses from Paardeberg, the hospitals were crowded in a fearful and lamentable manner with fever-stricken men. Over a thousand new graves had been made in the churchyard before the pestilence abated.

It was on May 1 that Lord Roberts moved forward again. Pretoria was the goal this time, the capital of the Transvaal. Once again, with a front of forty miles, the great army streamed on, sweeping the country as in a great net, through the meshes of which the Boer commandos dodged or fought their way. On the hills of the city of gold—Johannesburg, the capital of the Rand—the ridges were held by sharpshooters, and it required some ding-dong fighting to clear them off. But this was done, and Botha's army sullenly retreated,

abandoning the treasure-house of Africa to the victorious race.

Then once again Lord Roberts advanced, untiring in his energy, indomitable in his purpose, with French's cavalry sweeping away the Boers to the west and Ian Hamilton's infantry making straight for the right flank of the enemy's position at Pretoria.

The capital of the Transvaal is guarded in front by two hills, and its gateway is a narrow neck between them. On either height the enemy was posted in strength, and a terrific shell and rifle fire greeted the advance of our troops. It was the last big battle of the war, for never again did any strong force of Boers hold their ground against the combined divisions of the British army. Henceforth it was a game of hide and seek, in which the forfeits were often heavy enough on our side, but the ultimate issue of which was never doubtful.

After all, the defence of Pretoria was but a half-hearted one, and it cost us only seventy men to force the gateway of the hills. Then, hour after hour, as Lord Roberts sat his horse in the centre of the great square of Pretoria, with the Transvaal Government buildings on each side of it, there poured past him a seemingly endless stream of armed men, mounted and on foot—the weary, haggard, tattered, sunburnt, dust-caked men who had fought so many battles, endured so many hardships, tramped so many hundreds of miles—while above them waved at last the broad flag of Empire, the emblem of might and, may we always say, of right as well!

When the march past was over a staff officer turned to Lord Roberts, and, with a sound of exultation in his voice, said:

‘You must be a happy man to-day, sir?’

‘No,’ said the Field-Marshal, and an unutterably sad and weary look clouded his face for a moment—‘no, not happy—thankful.’

The staff officer said no more. He remembered the grave in Natal, where the young Lieutenant lay who had been the hope and pride of his great and noble father. So was it also

with the Empire. Too many brave men lay beneath the African soil for the British race to be happy at this triumph. But to all of those who loved the honour of their country there came a feeling of deep thankfulness when Roberts reached Pretoria.

CHAPTER LXXIII

THE END OF THE WAR

Not, alas ! for a long time yet was the end of the war in sight, though we had broken the back of the enemy's resistance, captured their capitals, annexed their territories, and proclaimed the paramount power of the British Empire in South Africa. Ten thousand irreconcilables still held the field against us, and for two weary years we had to face all the difficulties and dangers and disappointments of a fierce guerilla war. In the space of this small book—small for so great a subject—it is impossible to give even a bare outline of all those skirmishes and ambuscades, those long chases after a mobile enemy, those desperate fights between small forces on either side, those doublings and turnings and twistings of Boer horsemen and British cavalry, in this dreadful game of hide and seek, which for so long a time wearied the patience and exasperated the feelings of the British people.

The Boer leaders of this last, hopeless, and desperate struggle—the wily De Wet, the stubborn Botha, the dashing De la Rey—took a lot of finding and a lot of beating. In the enormous tracts of wild country through which they roved with their commandos, and where rugged kopjes and narrow passes could be held by a small number of sharpshooters against vastly superior forces advancing to the attack, it was inevitable that many accidents and tragedies should take place. To the public at home, who could not realize the conditions of such fighting, it seemed a mysterious and bitter thing that, with our great army in South Africa, we should still be im-

tent to crush the enemy, or to prevent the constant loss of valuable lives. Every month there came news of some ambush into which British convoys had been trapped and desperate encounters in which small parties of our troops were almost annihilated, and, at distressingly frequent intervals, accounts of surrenders of British to Boers. 'Another surrender!' became at last a phrase which, from its frequency and bitterness, cast a slur upon the reputation of our soldiers in South Africa, and made old men shake their heads and say, 'Such things were not in our days!' Yet most of these surrenders were not due to cowardice. They simply meant that if a small body of infantry became surrounded, as was very easily done, by a stronger body of horsemen, all hard riders and crack shots, escape was practically impossible. Nevertheless, 'surrender' is an ugly word, and it is better that the spirit of the nation should have been shocked at such episodes, inevitable though they were, than that they should have been lightly considered.

It was the master-mind of Lord Kitchener which eventually solved the situation, and wore down the strength and resources of the guerrillas. By his famous system of block-houses, built at short intervals of space, round great stretches of country, and actually linked together by wire ropes, he gradually hemmed in the Boer commandos under De Wet and De la Rey, and prevented them from so easily breaking through the ever-pursuing columns of infantry and squadrons of cavalry which had so long endeavoured to surround these mobile enemies. Huge captures of men, waggons, guns, and stores were now made, and although De Wet and the other leaders themselves invariably succeeded in escaping through the British cordons, it was evident that the Boer resistance was nearing its end through a process of exhaustion.

Paul Kruger, ex-President of the late Transvaal Republic, had long since fled from the land of his birth, of his stirring adventures, of his long years of power and political ambition, and was a moody and miserable exile in Holland. One's pity

must go out to the old man, whose days were to end in this tragedy of blighted hopes and bitter memories.

In spite of the exaggerated reverence still held for him by the Boer people, the British Government would not consider him as in any way the representative of the late Republic, and they waited patiently until the leaders still in arms came forward with offers of submission. That did not happen until March 23, 1902, when Lucas Meyer, Schalk Burger, and four other leading Boers came to Middleburg Station and asked to be forwarded to Pretoria to discuss terms of peace with Lord Kitchener. Nor was it till a month later that these men returned as envoys to the commandants of the Boer army in the field for the purpose of getting their consent to end the war. Steyn, the ex-President of the late Orange Free State—now almost blind and a broken man in body and spirit—De Wet, the fierce guerilla chief, and the nimble De la Rey put the question to the vote. Then sixty-four delegates from the Boer commandos proceeded to Vereenigen, and from May 15 to May 31 they haggled and fought over the terms of surrender offered by the British Government.

Taking into consideration the fact that the war had not been of our making, that 20,000 British soldiers lay buried on African soil, that 100,000 men had been stricken with disease, and that we had spent £200,000,000 of money, those terms were not ungenerous. The burghers were required to lay down their arms and to swear allegiance to King Edward VII., in return for which their liberty and property would be faithfully respected, their language would be allowed in schools and law-courts, self-government would be granted as soon as possible, the people would be helped to re-occupy their farms, and £3,000,000 of money would be given to the farmers to help them to renewed prosperity. Seldom, indeed, in the history of the world has a conquering nation shown such humanity and sympathy for its former enemies. On May 31 these terms were accepted, and thus ended a war which will always be a painful chapter in the story of our Empire.

After many blunders, many disasters, we had fought our way through to victory, as no one with any patriotism had ever doubted. Not wholly in vain was it that so much blood had been spilt. The days of danger had called forth the manhood of the nation and of the race. The sons of the Empire, from East and West, had fought together and died together, and in that brotherhood of blood they had cemented the bonds of union between the mother-country and her colonies with a strength that, we trust, will stand the strain of centuries. Before the war it had been said by our enemies that the British Empire was a mere 'geographical expression.' But now not even our enemies may deny that it is an historical truth.

In conclusion it may be said, thankfully and with full sincerity, that our late enemies are now, if not our friends, at least our honourable fellow-citizens. They have seen that, on the whole, British supremacy means British justice, and that there is as much liberty under the Union Jack as ever there was under the Republican flag. Too soon is it for all the bitter memories of the war to be forgotten, and we may well allow the Boers the pride of their heroic achievements and of their national defence. We also had our full share of heroic deeds, and feel no hatred of the men who fought us so gallantly and were such worthy foes. The future prosperity of South Africa depends not only upon the purity and honesty of the British Government, but upon the loyalty and friendliness of King Edward's Dutch subjects. To those who know their history there need not be much doubt about the first of these conditions, and we may have every hope that the other is assured.

CHAPTER LXXIV

THE EMPIRE AND THE WORLD-WAR

THE long struggle of the South African War had a far-reaching influence on the spirit of the British peoples and the future history of the world.

In spite of victory over the Boers, and the gallantry of officers and men from all parts of the Empire, the war left many painful memories which changed the political outlook of our nation. Many were ashamed of the loud-mouthed vulgarities which had called to their patriotism. They were shocked by the inefficiency which had postponed victory so long. They had a revulsion of feeling against the ideas of a military Imperialism which had been so popular under the spell of men like Joseph Chamberlain as a politician and Rudyard Kipling as a poet. A new school of thought was more interested in the social conditions of the working classes than in the domination of other races, and believed more in the self-government of our colonial possessions than in a vast Empire under the direct rule of the British Government. In Great Britain the Imperialists of the old school were turned out of office, and were succeeded, in 1907, by the Liberals under Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, whose first policy was to make friends with our former enemies in South Africa, and to give them a full charter of self-government. The Transvaal and the Orange Free State entered a confederation with Cape Colony and Natal as a self-governing union under the British Crown, and the bitter enmity of the war was to some extent assuaged by the generous spirit of this settlement.

At the same time the spirit of self-government was growing strong in other parts of the Empire. Australia, New Zealand and Canada, proud of their vital growth, desired to be treated no longer as colonies but as nations. They had a new sense of importance and power. They were not disposed to accept

dictatorship from England. They were the younger sons who had grown up and wanted absolute liberty with only a sentimental allegiance—not less loyal for that—to the ‘old folks at home.’ In Imperial conferences in England their premiers made it clear that they were no longer prepared to accept foreign treaties made in England without their discussion and consent, if their own interests were involved.

The separate States of Australia, rather jealous of each other’s progress but conscious of national problems greater than state rights, united under a federal government and adopted the title of Commonwealth. Canada also linked up its provinces and established a Dominion Government. New Zealand, under Sir George Grey, followed by radical governments, was fearless in democratic legislation and enacted laws which gave more protection to the labourer, small farmer, and city worker than in any other part of the Empire. These younger nations of the Empire had gone beyond the pioneer stage and those early adventures and struggles which I have told in this book. They had built great cities. The general comfort of their people was higher than in the old world. They looked forward to the future with confidence in its rich promise. They had no fears.

Yet at the very time these Dominions were reaching out to the full maturity of development and self-governing rights, and when peace seemed most secure, they were approaching great dangers of which they were almost unaware. The British Empire itself was challenged by a new power in the world and by explosive forces among the older nations. Beneath the peace of Europe there was a seething of national rivalries intensified by commercial competition and inflamed by racial ambitions.

The partition of Africa during the latter half of the nineteenth century was one cause of the world-war in 1914. It aroused fierce rivalry among nations envious of the British Empire and eager to grab at territories not yet claimed in which they could find raw material for their commercial

expansion and room for their Imperial ambitions. There was a race among the European nations for African possessions.

France established herself in Morocco and Algeria, and took possession of a great hinterland behind the British colonies of Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, and Nigeria. The French also had a slice of the Congo with the German Cameroons above them and a great Belgian Congo on their eastern frontier. The Portuguese had territories in West and East Africa. The Germans established important colonies in South-West and East Africa. The Italians competed with the French and Spanish in North Africa and took possession of Tripoli. They also shared Somaliland to the south of Abyssinia.

The British protectorate over Egypt was a cause of hostility among other powers—especially France. In 1898 French feelings were so embittered against us that war was only narrowly averted when General Marchand hoisted the French flag at Fashoda and tried to cut across the British advance after our conquest of the Soudan. When he was forced to retire he shed tears and France raged against 'perfidious Albion.' It was to pacify France on the subject of Egypt that the British Government agreed to the French occupation of Morocco and thereby excited the animosity of German Imperialists, who regarded Morocco as their share of North Africa. So the Dark Continent put an evil spell upon the European nations and led to a conflict of ambitions.

It was the new Imperialism of Germany which became the greatest menace in the world to those countries which, like the British Empire, had forestalled the German people in discovery, conquest, and possessions. That menace became dangerous when William II. became Emperor of Germany, and the figurehead of a German Imperialism more arrogant and aggressive than anything the world had known in modern history.

The Kaiser throughout his reign identified himself with a new school of German philosophy which was adopted by a

powerful class of military chiefs, the 'Junker' noblemen of Prussia, the statesmen who shaped the policy of the German Empire, and the professors and writers who dominated the mind of the rising generation in German schools and universities. It was a belief in the destiny of the German race to exercise an all-powerful influence in the modern world, to stamp the imprint of its 'Kultur,' or civilization and spirit, upon other peoples, to consolidate its political dominion over Middle Europe, and to obtain a controlling influence in Asia. By the invincible strength of its Army supported later by a supreme Navy all other nations would be compelled to acknowledge the genius, the power and the glory of the German race.

This faith in German destiny was expressed in violent and brutal language combined with a strange religious mysticism which assumed that God was on the side of the German people in their Imperial ambitions. The German Emperor spoke of God as his 'Divine Ally,' as 'our good old German God.' At the same time he spoke of his own 'mailed fist,' and pictured himself as a War Lord clothed in 'shining armour.' 'Nothing,' he said, 'must henceforth be settled in the world without the intervention of Germany. My cause is right and I shall follow it. Those who oppose me I shall dash in pieces.'

He posed as the champion of Islam, allied himself with the Sultan of Turkey, trained the Turkish Army with German officers, and dreamed of a line from Berlin to Bagdad with an Oriental Empire as its great goal. In 1895 he declared that the future of Germany lay upon the water, and increased the German Navy until it was a formidable challenge to British sea-power. German philosophers like Nietzsche preached the duty of brutality for those who would be strong, and glorified war and its most ruthless cruelties.

Throughout the nation the German people, under the spell of this philosophy, were jealous of the British Empire, which held so much of the earth's surface. They were made to believe that the British people had become decadent and

weak after their adventurous history. It was true, said the Germans, that the British had founded a great Empire, but they did not deserve to hold it because they had not the strength to defend it. They did not even train their youth to military service. They were lazy and inefficient. Their Empire was held together only by sentiment and bluff. 'A thing that is wholly a sham,' wrote Treitschke, 'cannot in this universe of ours endure for ever.'

German Imperialists were exasperated because our Empire stood in the way of their colonial development. They were perturbed when King Edward VII. and his statesmen, conscious of these German ambitions, patched up their differences with France and established the *Entente Cordiale* between the two nations. They were outraged when in 1911 France occupied Fez in Morocco, and when Great Britain refused to allow Germany to make a naval base at Agadir on the North African coast. The British Fleet with sealed orders lay ready to put to sea, and Lloyd George, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced in a dramatic way that at all hazards Great Britain would maintain her place and commerce among the great powers of the world. That speech was regarded as direct challenge by German Imperialists. They believed it to be a threat of war in the event of Germany trampling upon French claims in Morocco. From that moment the German military party prepared for a war which they considered inevitable if their destiny were to be fulfilled.

There was a strong party in Germany in favour of the war, yet with all their faith in the invincibility of the German Army they were not without uneasy fears. On their Eastern frontier was the great Slav race, and Russia was in military alliance with France. By sheer weight of numbers a hostile Russia would be formidable. In East Prussia this menace was a nightmare to people who knew that their homes and fields would be trampled down by the Russian hordes if they once began to move. German writers played upon the fears of the people while they inflamed their passion. They were

being 'hemmed in,' they wrote. They asserted that this combination of hostile forces was a menace to their existence. It was not Germany that was threatening to break the peace of the world, they declared, but their enemies who were seeking to cut across their path wherever they were trying to extend their influence, to deny them 'a place in the sun,' and to humiliate them as a great power. So many sincerely believed, with some proof, as it must be admitted, that the diplomats of Russia, France and Great Britain had combined to check German influence in Asia and Africa. But people who allow their rulers to talk habitually of 'mailed fists' and preach a gospel of brute force, glorifying warfare, ought not to be surprised when other nations combine to oppose them.

What is more remarkable is that in Great Britain there were few people who regarded this German menace seriously. They believed in the peaceful commonsense of German democracy rather than in the wild ravings of the Imperialists. They knew nothing, in the mass, of those conflicting forces of commercial and racial rivalry leading up to a world-wide explosion.

In England a series of industrial strikes, the struggle for Home Rule in Ireland, the exciting agitation in favour of votes for women, occupied most people's minds to the exclusion of all international problems. Their statesmen did not warn them of the enormous danger looming close, did not reveal to them the secret understandings in which their lives were involved, did not train them for self-defence in a war that was really inevitable because of the conflict of national ambitions and the feverish increase of Navies and Armies, and the piling up of armaments, which made all Europe a powder-magazine for a spark to fire.

The spark was fired when the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated at Serajevo by a Serbian fanatic, as Austria believed without absolute proof. The Austrian Government demanded humiliating terms of punishment from the Serbians, and Germany stiffened these demands. Russia, the friend

and protector of Serbia, intervened, as Germany knew full well would happen. Russian ambitions for the future were bound up with Serbian independence. They dreamed of the Slav race in Constantinople stretching to the Adriatic through Serbia. Pan-Slav aspirations cut clean across Pan-German ambitions.

On July 30, 1914, Russia mobilized her armies, and in all the Foreign Offices, including Downing Street, where Sir Edward Grey was working desperately to preserve the peace of the world at the eleventh hour, there was the dreadful knowledge that events were moving swiftly to universal catastrophe.

France was bound to Russia. War with one meant war with both. Germany was in a state divided between panic at the forces rising against her and the fierce exultation of the military caste because at last the invincible might of the German Army would be proved to the world. 'It is now or never,' said the German Emperor. On August 1 Germany declared war on Russia, crossed French territory next day, and demanded a right of way through Belgium.

To the last moment Germany half hoped and believed that Great Britain would stand out, owing to political strife at home, moral hesitation, and ties of friendship with the German people. They were hopelessly ignorant of the real conditions and quality of England, and they exaggerated the gravity of industrial troubles and the threat of civil war on account of Ireland. They were staggered and furious when on August 4, after the German invasion of Belgium, the British Government declared war. On the following day a German mine-laying vessel was sunk off the mouth of the Thames by the cruiser *Amphion*, the first act of hostility which ever happened between Germany and Great Britain on land or water. . . . The world-war had begun.

The history of that war is recent in our memory, and cannot be told here. It soaked the fields of Europe in blood and destroyed the finest manhood of many nations. It made

a wide track of ruin, not yet healed, in the heart of European civilization. Its hostile forces clashed in Africa and Asia, and black, brown, and yellow peoples were enlisted to serve the white man's war. The New World was drawn, before the end, into the quarrel of the Old World. The Japanese Navy was in alliance with the British Fleets. Indian Mohammedans fought under our command with Turkish Mohammedans in Palestine and Mesopotamia. Chinese labourers unloaded shells for British guns and cut down timber in France for British trenches. Moroccan Arabs, Seneghalese Negroes advanced against German gun-fire and were slaughtered in heaps. There was no part of the world quite untouched by this war in which the white races struggled for mastery.

✱ All the knowledge gained by the research of scientists in a century of wonderful discovery was used for the destruction of human life. The machinery which man had invented for industrial development was adapted to the production of weapons making slaughter more widespread. The victory of flight for which mankind had yearned since first they watched the joyous flight of birds extended the area of ruin and intensified the terror of war. Poison-gas supplemented the deadly work of high explosives. The submarine with its silent torpedo sank great ships powerless at first against this invisible enemy until the highways of the sea were strewn with their wreckage. Floating mines were scattered in the waters. It seemed as though civilization itself, all the progress of mankind away from barbarism to knowledge and beauty and law, might go down in this struggle among the highest races of the earth. It nearly happened.

The British people went into this war, as far as the majority of its folk knew, for reasons of chivalry and honour—to save Belgium and aid France against brutal and unprovoked assault. Before the war ended it was struggling for its own existence. To prevent a victory of brutality, and then to save the Empire, the British peoples laid aside all their own political and social strife, closed their ranks, offered them-

selves for service and sacrifice. It was the most wonderful demonstration of loyalty ever seen in an Empire so widely scattered and so loosely held as ours. Sentiment, despised by cynics, so frail as it had seemed to hostile observers, was found to be stronger than self-interest, stronger than obedience, stronger than any Imperial power based on military despotism or autocratic rule. These young free nations overseas, so impatient of control and restraint, offered all they had in manhood and wealth to the Mother Country from whom they had sprung. Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa said, 'We are with you to the death,' and they were not idle words. From backwoods and ranches, from sheep-farms and wheat-fields, from factories and workshops and timber-yards, their men went to enrol themselves for service and were in a hurry to reach the battlefields of Europe. Even India, in which there had been some revolt against British rule, was for the most part loyal to the British Crown and people. The Indian Princes poured out their wealth. The Indian cavalry of Sikhs, Pathans and other fighting races came over to France, where they suffered agony in wet trenches under German high-explosive fire, and to Egypt, Palestine and Mesopotamia, where they fought gallantly in conditions more suited to their way of life. There was not a far outpost of the Empire from which we did not get a contingent of volunteers.

In many cases they were 'homing birds' who came back to defend the parent nest. The first drafts from Canada and Australia contained a large majority of English-born men, or Scots and Irish, who had gone out in their youth. From all the Dominions overseas came the brothers and cousins of our own men who were also storming the recruiting offices and offering their lives.

These Colonials, as we still called them, coming in wave after wave of splendid manhood, were the heirs to that spirit of adventure which had built up the Empire, and in their souls was the same courage that had inspired the pioneers

and explorers, the sea-rovers and the merchant-adventurers whose story I have told in this book. They were stronger and tougher men than their kinsfolk in khaki, from London suburbs and city streets. They had already been hardened to wind and weather, and life under the sky, and rough riding and heavy toil. Their muscles were taut, their nerves steady. They had a free pride of their own, in their own manhood; scornful of discipline—especially the Australians—but magnificent in team-work and keen to do their job whatever the risks. Physically the Australians and New Zealanders were, I think, the most splendid types of manhood among all those men who marched up to Ypres, or flung themselves ashore at Gallipoli, or rode over the sandy plains towards Jerusalem, driving the Turks before them. In primitive strength, in individual initiative, they were on the whole more natural-born soldiers than our London lads or young men from provincial towns who had never slept under the stars or dug a shovel-full of earth. But it must be recorded and never forgotten that from first to last the English troops, even excluding the Scottish, Welsh, and Irish, formed 68 per cent. of the British Armies on all fronts, and suffered most and died most with a heroism that was more amazing because of their early lack of physical training.

The Empire was justified by her sons. All that German talk of British decadence, and all our own, was utterly false. After the first fever of war had passed, when its horrors were fully known, when it seemed unending, when the slaughter of our men mounted to tragic and frightful figures, when all the adventure had gone out of it and there was only the routine of trench warfare with its filth and weariness and wounds and death, the spirit of the men from the younger nations as well as of those at home, became more grim, more resolute in self-sacrifice. They settled down, not with any love of war—they hated it—but with an unbreakable will that the last penny of the Empire's wealth, the last drop of blood, must be spent rather than yield by any cowardly surrender,

although many hoped, as I did, that a decent peace might end their agony. Before the end came Canada had enrolled over 500,000 men, Australia nearly 400,000, New Zealand more than 100,000. They could not have done more. They offered all they had in manhood, material wealth, industrial energy.

So it was in Great Britain. Our last reserves who went into the fighting line after March of 1918 when the Germans made their final great attack—and nearly won—were boys of eighteen. Without the British Empire and that tide of British youth France would have been smashed and the dreams of the German Imperialists would have been fulfilled in Europe, Asia and Africa, before the United States could have flung her legions into the line. It was the immense man-power of the United States crowding into France at last which finally broke the will-power of the German people after a struggle in which they too had fought with supreme courage and desperate sacrifice. The hammer-strokes of the British troops in the last three months, the genius of Marshal Foch and enduring valour of France, and the new weight of the Americans, had turned the tide at last and broken the greatest military power the world had ever seen. German pride lay in the dust. Its surrender was abject and complete on land and sea.

The British Navy had been one of the decisive instruments of victory, and had lived up to its old traditions. The Grand Fleet had fought only one great action—the Battle of Jutland—in which the losses were heavy on both sides, but it had kept the German fleet locked up in its own ports. It had kept the seas clear for the convoy of troops and supplies from the other side of the world. In spite of German submarines which violated the old chivalry of sea warfare and did immense destruction to merchant shipping, the Americans, Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders, and South Africans were brought to Europe under British escort without interruption. Our merchant seamen and fisher-folk who went sweeping the sea for mines and searching for submarines were the true sons of

their sea-going race, and perhaps the greatest heroes of the war. The Emperor who had said, 'the future of Germany is on the water,' did not foresee, in his days of pride, the frightful humiliation of that scene when the German Navy surrendered to the British, according to the terms of the Armistice, without a shot in self-defence.

So the tragedy of the war ended, leaving the victors as well as the vanquished with the loss of their most splendid manhood, with immense debts, with a great heritage of sadness and suffering, and with unsettled problems for the future.

The war and the terms of peace altered the map of the world and changed the constitution of many nations. The German Emperor and his son fled across their frontier to Holland, and Germany became a Republic. It is not likely to remain a Republic. The old Austro-Hungarian Empire was broken to bits and its territories divided between its subject races and its ancient enemies. Serbia became a great power in geographical area, under the name of Jugo-Slavia. Greece obtained great possessions in Asia Minor and Thrace, which afterwards she had to relinquish when the Turks rose in arms again, repudiated the terms of peace imposed on them, and defied the powers of France and Britain who were tired of warfare. The Bohemians and Czechs became Czecho-Slovakia. Italy took possession of the Austrian Tyrol. Roumania was given Transylvania. The Poles regained the independence for which they had yearned through centuries of oppression and conquest by Germany and Russia. Russia, which had lost most men in the war—with four million dead—had made peace with the Germans in 1917, and, after a wild revolution and a reign of terror, had established a Republic of Communistic states in which there was for several years an equality of misery, hunger and ruin. On the Baltic coast three new nations—Esthonia, Lithuania, and Latvia—regained their independence after long serfdom under Russian rule.

The British Empire enlarged its territories by taking possession of the German colonies in Africa and by obtaining

mandates of protection over Palestine and Mesopotamia from which they had swept the Turks with English, Australian and Indian troops. London "Cockneys" had entered Jerusalem with Allenby in that last crusade, having gone further than Richard Cœur de Lion, and with not less courage than the Norman knights and English bowmen.

So the British Empire stands, intact, after that war which had challenged its power, and tested its strength to the uttermost. It stands in the world as a great assembly of free nations bound together, more strongly than before, by the remembrance of all that blood and sacrifice in defence of their life and ideals and common interests.

But it does not stand unchanging or unchangeable. All those impulses towards self-government which began to stir in the separate states of the Empire before the war have been intensified. Ireland, never content under British rule, always struggling, through tragic history, for liberty and independence, obtained it at last, after a civil war, horrible in its methods, and painful in remembrance, by the free gift of the King and the British Government, and is now the Irish Free State, on equal terms with the self-governing Dominions. Australia, Canada and New Zealand, after their immense service in the war, declare their right to an equal voice with Great Britain in all Imperial policy. India, stirred by a violent propaganda against British rule, is no longer content with the limited share of government allowed to native statesmen and is agitating for a self-governing constitution hardly suited as yet to her variety of races and religions, and to the Oriental habits of her peoples.

We are preparing to withdraw from Egypt after more than forty years of occupation during which we cleansed it of many corruptions and cruelties and did a great work of irrigation and development, giving new life to the Egyptian people. But the Egyptian leaders wish to be free of us for the sake of self-government, and we have acceded to their passionate desire, not without misgivings for the people as a whole.

Our position in the Soudan is involved in that withdrawal, and we are resisting the Egyptians who claim the Soudan as theirs because we are loth to abandon the Soudanese or let loose once again the barbaric passions which in the past made that country hideous with human bloodshed, slavery and torture. Mesopotamia and Palestine are a heavy cost to the British people after a war which has drained us of our reserves of wealth, crushed us under a heavy weight of taxation, and reduced our strength and spirit of adventure.

There are perils ahead which may again call upon our peoples for service and sacrifice. The European war and the victory of the Allies did not settle old problems or extinguish old rivalries. After a period of exhaustion they are reviving, inflamed by new hatreds, intensified in some nations by the sense of injustice, and in others by a sense of fear. The strains and stresses of commercial competition and financial forces striving against each other for self-existence or self-aggrandisement are strong and dangerous in all parts of the world. After the monstrous strife of the European war there is no sense of that security for which many men fought. There is a seething and stirring among the coloured races of the world, a discontent in many great nations, a sense of anxiety as to what the future holds.

The British Empire, with its federation of free peoples bound together in loyalty, depends upon that loyalty for its strength in the world. With its immense natural resources, its wide spaces needing the labour of virile men and healthy women, its immense powers of development, it holds out a great promise in the future for the British race if they keep their old qualities of character—their courage, their spirit of adventure, their love of liberty, their sense of fair play, their cleanness of heart. It was by those qualities, mainly, that the Empire was built up. By them we shall hold it and give an example to the world of a League of Nations loyal to the civilized code and obedient to international law for the sake of world peace.

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